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NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

T

In the early part of the Fourteenth Century, Paris was altogether so different from what the lapse of ages has made it, that it is scarcely possible to chronicle events of that period without endeavouring to bring, in some degree, the picture of what it then was before the reader's eye.

Spreading in unequal portions on either side the Seine, and over the intervening islands, the town consisted of three distinct parts. The division extending on the northern bank, in contradistinction to the two others denominated La Ville, contained the few dirty, narrow, confined alleys to which the much-persecuted Jews were restricted, as well as the more numerous and roomy streets assigned to that shameful excrescence of civilisation, legalised vice:—the frowning Louvre, the Prisons, the Hospitals, the Cemeteries, the Seat of Justice, the chief establishments of dawning commerce—all that marks the struggles of life or records its miseries was here centred.

Two wooden bridges, in a more easterly position, it must be observed, than the Pont Neuf of our days, protected on either bank by a strong chain of towers called the Grand et Petit Chatelet, gave access to that portion of the town called La Cité, which was situate on the island, and extended over the site of ancient Lutetia, the cradle of the metropolis. Here the palace of the king, the mansions of his nobles, and a few solemn, religious piles formed the quartier d'élite, on whose outskirts learning hung heavily in the dusty fabric of the Sorbonne and other colleges, which gave the third division, now called Le Quartier St. Germain, the name of L'Université.

Each of these parts formed a whole within itself, having different customs, usages, and even laws, claiming as it were a separate and individual existence; but they were environed by a common boundary of safety and privilege, being girt with a belt of walls and towers of defence, raised by Philip Augustus, and communicating across the river by means of a strong iron chain.

Without the fortifications rose, on all sides, isolated palaces and abbeys; and cultivated lands, gardens, and vineyards, were gradually becoming covered with dwelling-houses of the better sort, showing, even then, manifest indications of extension of boundary; and which, clustering thicker in succeeding ages, became denominated bourgs, until they finally merged in the many fauxbourgs of modern Paris. On and beyond

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the spot where later rose the eventful Tuileries, and are situate the majestic gardens of Le Nôtre, extended a wild track of woodland, in the midst of which the Maison du Bois, once the favourite residence of Philip Augustus, and the palace belonging to the Duke of Brittany, better known under the then common appellation of La Petite Bretagne,

were partially visible.

On the southern bank of the river, far from the city walls, where the temple of Isis once stood, lay the bourg and abbey of St. Germain; whilst, extending along what is at present the Quai Malaquais, the cloister of St. Augustin fronted the palace gardens, whose once verdant and stilly shades are now the very heart of city bustle and turmoil, and may, nay must at some distant period-for destruction is as much a part of

nature's law as creation—yield to the grassy silence of ruins.

To the north-east of the ville, and at some distance from its gates, rose, behind a dark, frowning curtain of battlements, environed by a deep The mean huts, fosse, a clump of massy towers of threatening aspect. thinly scattered over the surrounding grounds, added to rather than diminished the gloom that seemed to hover about this fortress; but the dull grey walls contrasted no less with the bright sky against which they were thrown out in strong relief, than did the stillness around, which permitted the twittering of birds and the chirps of the grasshopper to be heard, with the clanking of armour and horses' hoofs, the call of responding sentries, or the solemn and frequent tolling of the deep-mouthed bell that spoke of the life within them. An involuntary feeling of awe stole over the passing wayfarer as he listened to the sounds of war or devotion, the clash of arms, or the vesper peal, or when the "De Profundis" or the "Te Deum" were wafted to his ear in the grave tones of a hundred voices. Those dark walls effectually screened the world within from the The triumphs, the hopes, the joys, the sorrows of which world without. the winds were babbling, belonged to none without those precincts—the prayer might not be joined in, the jousts might not be witnessed, nay, scarcely might the mortals who engaged in either be gazed upon by the vulgar eye; and curiosity, mingling with the ill-will which even what is great and good inspire when withdrawn from ordinary commune, gave rise to vague and superstitious notions connected with them, and led men to imagine criminal mysteries in the most innocent and ordinary transactions from the witnessing of which they were debarred.

These strong and lofty towers that seemed designed to protect the town from the north, or hold it in check, as the case might be, belonged to the ill-starred Knights of the Temple-a fitting abode for an order half monastic and more than half warlike, whose wealth claimed palaces, whose strength enabled them to keep important strongholds in every

country, and whose numbers might have peopled a kingdom.

When the eye rests upon a map of Paris and its environs representing them such as they were in those or even earlier days-when the mighty metropolis of modern France lay like an oasis in the midst of surrounding wastes and marshes-when tangled underwood or full-grown trees shaded spots since reclaimed to civilisation, we cannot but think how those places, once plunged in tranquil obscurity, have been marked out to posterity by the tragedies there enacted. Here stand the walls of the Louvre, as yet not darkened with age-not yet re-echoing to the cries of the murdered Protestants. There, where from pendant branches the redbreast peeped upon the untrodden snow, the blood of royalty has not been shed. The Place de Grêves has not yet to boast its sickening accumulation of gory records. The churches stand unpolluted, the palaces undefiled. The spots where the pile for the heretic, and the guillotine for the noble—where the Bastille were to rise, are all there unmarked. The fearful crimes and no less fearful retributions which have followed so thickly upon each other as to leave scarce a stone sacred from the stain of innocent blood, lay yet buried in the womb of futurity; and turning from the remembrance of, perhaps, the saddest annals that the scroll of history unfolds, we contemplate the yet untainted page with something of the feeling of him who, after gazing on a criminal laden with guilt, chances to look upon a portrait of the same individual whilst yet an unconscious infant with the seal of innocence on his young brow.

In that portion of the town which, as we have said, was denominated la ville, opposite to the venerable and curious church of St. Jaques la Boucherie, and forming the angle of the streets des Marivaux and of the Scriveners, stood, and perhaps still stands, though doubtless much altered in form, a house of indifferent, almost mean size, but picturesque from the penthouse-like projection that sheltered the pointed arch of its narrow doorway, its flight of stone steps, quaint gables, and the irregular openings that served for windows. The spring was not sufficiently advanced to preclude the necessity for fires, and, on the evening when our tale commences, there streamed from the lower casement of this dwelling a ruddy glow of light, well calculated to excite the envy of the chilled wayfarer, or his desire to partake of the genial heat it promised. Yet no foot ascended the inviting steps, and that for the best of all reasons-but few people ventured forth in those times after night-fall, and and those few were driven from the safety and comfort of their homes by imperious necessity alone.

By the care with which bolt and bar were drawn within, and by the attitude of the few occupants of the room from which the light proceeded, evidently no late visitor was either expected or desired. These occupants were three individuals united to each other by the ties of blood, and yet no mark of consanguinity could be discovered as, huddled together beneath the ample mantel-piece, the blaze of the fire played upon their countenances, and revealed their diverse characteristics.

On the stone seat within the chimney, whose huge dimensions made it like a separate chamber, sat an old woman more bent with infirmity than age, whose looks seemed to diffuse the acerbity of misfortune around her. A spirit worn and fretted by the minor trials of life was legible in every line of that wrinkled visage, in those sharpened features, and even in the parchment-skinned long bony hands extended towards the blazing logs to catch their concentrated emanations. And yet across that uninviting face there passed ever and anon a gleam of gentler, kinder feeling, that spoke the mother as she turned, occasionally, to the person nearest her, a pale, thin young man of low stature, whose heavy forehead and flat features were redeemed by nothing favourable, except the intelligence that lighted up a pair of large dark eyes with unwonted brilliancy and meaning, and stamped the ill-formed brow with the dignity of thought.

The third personage composing this little group was a young girl in the first blush of womanhood, of the bright, glowing, impassioned beauty of southern climes, the easy grace of whose form, ripe and majestic beyond her years, not even the clumsy folds of a coarse brown garment could conceal. An open, lofty forehead, and eyes of Oriental splendour, shaded with well-pencilled brows and long lashes of jet black, left the beholder but little inclination to be critical on the other features, which were, moreover, relieved by the deep glow of a brunette, and an arch smile. She sat upon a low wooden stool, at as great a distance from her companions as the space within the chimney would admit of, with her back partially towards them, a position for which her nearer vicinity to the fire afforded an excuse; but the constant turning of her head, now displaying tresses of coal-black hair, and now the lovely face they shaded, showed her not indifferent to the conversation maintained between them.

"Yes," the old woman was saying in positive, almost peremptory tones—"yes, Nicholas, it is time you should take unto yourself a wife, as

your father did before you -it is time, I tell you."

"Surely, mother, Nicholas Flamel, the poor scrivener, who can barely earn enough to provide a scanty subsistence for his aged parent, is not so lucky a person as to make his marriage a matter of moment to any one, even to himself. Why should I be impatient to share my poverty with or bequeath it to others?"

"Nonsense! who speaks of poverty," answered the dame, sharply. "God knows we have already had enough of that, and our full. No—no;

I say marry, my son, not to be poorer, but richer than you are."

"Richer! and pray, mother, how could that make me richer?" said the young man, turning his eyes slowly, and, as it seemed, involuntarily towards the young girl: their glances met for an instant, and were as quickly averted.

"Why, you silly boy, by taking a moneyed girl for a wife to be sure not by adding nought to nought," replied the mother, catching the fur-

tive glances.

"But," urged the youth, "what if I be not inclined to marriage at

"Men never are till they are too old for it, I really believe," replied the vexed matron. "Your father was no chicken when he wedded me, or he might be here now to guide us all aright, a heavy task for a poor, helpless old body like myself."

"I am yet very young," responded Nicholas, apologetically-"very-

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"Ay, you may be young, but I am getting old, and need some one to help me about the house."

"Have you not my cousin Margot?—could any one be more attentive?"

"Thank you, Nicholas," murmured a soft voice; and again the bright

eyes of the cousins met.

"Margot—Margot—she is a good girl, I have nothing to say against her," said the old woman, testily, "though I must own her eyes wander about at church a great deal too freely, instead of being fixed on the ground with decorous gravity, as mine used to be in my young days.

Then, we are not out of the porch but her voice is raised to greet a friend-it is the world and all to get her along the street, stopping before every Jongleur or Bateleur she meets, looking up at every knight or grave magistrate that may happen to pass us, tarrying for the blessing of every friar, toying with every child—the scrapes she would get into without my vigilance, the trouble she gives me in looking after her is not to be told! She is the wear and tear of my life! No-I shall be glad to get her safe into the matron's hood by-and-by."

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"A great deal too much for her good," was the ready answer. "I

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"True, poor girl, her pleasures are so few, and her trials have begun so early, that one may well excuse her snatching eagerly at any relief

from the dull home she lives in."

"I never wish for a happier," responded the girl, warmly-"nevernever."

Her cheek glowed as she spoke; and pausing, as if ashamed of her eagerness, suffered her head to sink on her bosom; but, raising it again, she said in meek, almost humble accents:

"I know I am too giddy-I will endeavour to become more staid-

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"Nay, Nicholas has no particular desire to see you one way rather than another—it is all one to him," replied the old woman, scornfully.
"Not so, mother," hastily put in Nicholas; "if I wished nothing

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"So she is to a certain extent—but I want a daughter, Nicholas" the good woman spoke the word with emphasis—"and that you alone can give me. A quiet, tranquil soul, gliding about one so softly that one need not be aware of her presence, except when inclined to notice it, so mild that discussion be impossible, so staid that reproof be needless—a model of piety and decorum, edifying in her walk of life, a support to you in your coming years, a prop to my declining age."

"In short, a light that will burn very brightly without crackling," answered the youth, laughing. "I wonder where such a paragon may be

found."

"Not far from here-not far from here, if you would but look about

Margot had by this time completely turned her back upon the speakers, gazing intently into the bright flame, whilst her cousin's eyes watched the spiral ascent of the smoke up the chimney, and the old dame looked straight before her, seemingly absorbed in the pleasing picture her imagination had conjured up. A long pause ensued, which no one cared to

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break; until the mother abruptly took up the thread of the conversation as though it had not been broken.

"And Pernelle Blanchard, the rich money-changer's daughter. I am sure she likes you, and, what's more, I like her. There's a girl worth looking after, Nicholas!"

"Because she is good and gentle? But she is not the only good or gentle maiden of my degree upon whom I might throw my eyes, if such

a thing be absolutely necessary."

"I speak of her because she is good and rich, and the only opportunity of the sort that may ever be thrown in your way; as to Odette, her elder sister, she would not have you, I am sure; and Colombe, the

younger, is a mere child."

"I have never bestowed a thought on any of them," said the youth, carelessly; and advancing his three-legged stool nearer to the fire, he casually perceived the glad smile that illumined his young cousin's countenance.

"The more's the shame, after my repeated hints. For the last two months I have been doing little else but trying to hammer indirectly the notion into your thick skull."

"That mode of proceeding may, then, account for the indirect manner

in which it has entered it," said the son, coldly.

"Come, come, my dear boy," urged Dame Flamel, coaxingly, "do not provoke me by assuming such an air of indifference when we are agitating so grave a question. What though you rest satisfied with poring all day long over parchment deeds, drawn up with untiring patience and in good Latin for a mere trifle, or ornamenting a missal with those tiny miniatures which, I am sure, my eyes are too bad to see any merit in !"

"Oh, dear aunt, they are so beautiful!" exclaimed the young girl.

"Well, at any rate one's never paid for the trouble they give—then the strain they are upon your eyes and your time! and then, again, sitting up so many weary nights to copy foolish rhymes, and more silly romances that take years to finish, and are never adequately remunerated! If you can endure all this contentedly, I cannot. It is a pull upon your strength—your very life, I may say, at an age when over-exertion may be fatal; and yet the earnings are insufficient even to bring comfort within these bare walls."

"Oh, aunt, have we not fire to warm ourselves by, a meal to sit down to when we are hungry, raiment and shelter? Does Nicholas ever let these things fail us?"

"Ay-but at what price are they procured? You, Margot, do not think of that." The young girl averted her face to hide the fast-gathering tears that obscured her eyes. "Besides, we can barely command the necessaries of life; we have none of its enjoyments. Were the rich changer's daughter my son's wife, then might he afford me a Sunday dress of wrought stuff with furred hood, and a gold chain to hang round my neck, such as some of our neighbours display at church-I might have a cushioned chair to sit and doze in before my fire, and a wench to serve me up a tit-bit whenever I felt a fancy for it.'

"I am afraid, dearest mother, your fancy is inclined to soar beyond bounds—the ordinance of the present king forbids imperatively the use of furs and jewels to those of our condition; and, as to dainties, I can but trust you have not set your heart on a peacock, which princely fare is as unlawful as it is unattainable."

"I wish but for what is right and proper for one who has long borne the weight of life to desire," said Dame Flamel, reproachfully; "a relief from that harassing anxiety for the morrow which eats into one's very heart!—that corroding fear of coming evil which embitters every passing hour! It is well for the young and the thoughtless to let the morrow take care of itself; the old cannot do so even if they would. Were you to fall ill, or to die, what would become of me?"

A longer pause than the first ensued. The son's countenance became even graver than usual at his mother's last words; and Margot's heaving bosom betrayed her inward agitation, for her face was buried in her hands. After an interval, so long as to permit thought to arrive at a conclusion, again the mother broke silence, resuming in a more coaxing manner:

"And, Nicholas, if there were enough in the house to relieve us from the immediate pressure of want, whenever your exertions happened to flag, you would be more at liberty to follow your bent. You might draw those stupid triangles and squares, in which you so much delight, on as many skins of parchment as you please, for all that parchment is getting dearer every day."

Nicholas involuntarily smiled at this naive hit at his favourite study, mathematics, and perhaps, too, at the agreeable ideas thus suggested.

"You might also," continued the dame, seizing with all the eagerness of feminine perception upon the advantage she had gained, "buy some of those dusty manuscripts you love so much, and have leisure to read them too;—and after all, Pernelle is pretty and amiable, and is, I am sure, sensible of your merits. But the bells of St. Jaques and the night-crier's horn warn us it is late—so to bed, my children; come, let me give you my blessing."

With the filial reverence of those times, Nicholas and his cousin knelt, side by side, before the old dame, who cast a curious inquiring glance at Margot, which was, however, defeated by the latter stooping her beautiful head so as to permit the hands of her aged relative to rest on it. Tracing the sign of the cross on their brows, Dame Flamel, in unusually soft and solemn accents, and simple but affecting language, implored a blessing from Heaven upon the children of her love; a ceremony which lost nothing of its soothing and elevating influence by daily repetition. The parties rose after its performance, and, embracing each other in silence, separated for the night.

II.

THE females occupied the upper story, which, like the ground-floor, consisted but of two chambers; that facing the street being appropriated to the mother's use, the other, overlooking a narrow yard behind, to Margot's. A slight partition which curtailed the proportions of the latter, in more prosperous days forming a species of recess for a wench, a luxury long since discarded, made an additional barrier between them; a circumstance which, probably, neither of them that evening regretted, even had they ever before been inclined to do so.

Margot sat upon the edge of her humble pallet. There was no light

but that of the moon streaming through a small curtainless aperture. tipping, here and there, some projecting corner, and concentrating itself on the floor; yet everything in the room was clearly visible. But she looked not at the few familiar objects that surrounded her, the rudely carved oaken prie-Dieu worn with the kneeling of the many faithful souls who had owned it before her, and whose hearts, softened by adversity, had known the consolation of prayer; the small steel mirror and heavy oaken cabinet, the only confidants of her innocent coquetries, when the former reflected her youthful loveliness to her well-pleased eye, and the latter yielded up her girlish store-scanty enough it was-of female ornaments; the long bahut, or wooden trunk, on which were curiously carved the emblems of the passion, in accompaniment to the crucifix on its centre; and which an antiquary would now value as highly as it was then thought meanly of in comparison with those of the rich, who resorted to so many means of embellishing this article of furniture common to all. Margot was too much absorbed to cast even a look on the capricious vagaries of the moon as it threw objects into light or partial shade—the lights and shades within her own breast alone occupied her thoughts.

"Did she love her cousin Nicholas, or did she not?" She put this question to herself that night for the hundredth time, without being able satisfactorily to answer it. If not, why did her heart beat so anxiously whenever the subject of his marriage was broached? Why did she dislike to hear him praise another? Why was she proud of his approbation—why uneasy when he was from home, and ever long for his presence? Above all, why did his indifference oppress and offend her, or the slightest token of a warmer interest than usual on his part make her heart overflow with tenderness? Was not this love?—love which his cold disregard

threatened to blight as the hoar frost nips the early bud?

But was his carelessness of manner real unconsciousness of the state of her feelings, or the most perfect indifference? That he read her thoughts, she doubted not. How could it be otherwise? How could an artless girl like herself veil her secrets from one who was able to decipher huge Latin manuscripts. So deeply versed in the mysteries of the stars, how could he fail to unravel those of the human heart? And the simple girl sighed to think that hers was a page he cared not to peruse, or, what seemed to her more likely, reading it aright, it was his pleasure to check its impulse towards himself.

And after all, what right had she to hope that it should be otherwise? Connected with his mother, but so distantly as to make a union with him lawful even in those days, when the Church weighed relationship in so nice a balance, she had been left many years back, by the untimely death of her parents, wholly dependent upon her charity—what then could she bring to Nicholas but an additional load of poverty, the more bitter in

consideration of those who might spring up to share it?

These reasonable deductions were too often brought forward by the suspicious aunt in their long confabulations at the spinning-wheel by the kitchen hearth, not to have sunk deep into Margot's mind; and yet she had dared to build airy castles even whilst these ominous reflections were drawled into her ear in every possible key, from the admonitory and threatening to the lamentable and doleful. True, Dame Flamel named

no names, but Margot felt instinctively whereat she was driving; and was forced to admit the justice of her remarks, even whilst nurturing visions of impossible chances and unheard-of windfalls that might make Nicholas or herself independent of such prudential considerations; and at any time one cordial avowal, one kind word from him, one spoken word of love, and she would have fallen into his arms.

But that avowal was never even hinted at—that word never seemed to hover on his lips; and, though opportunities abounded, he appeared to shun them in a way to send a lasting chill to the poor girl's heart. Thus Margot could not determine if she were in love with Nicholas,

although she felt herself on the verge of becoming so.

We will not pause to inquire how far the youth's individual merits, or the chance that limited his beautiful cousin, at the period of dawning passion, solely to his society, contributed to the feelings entertained towards him. Nor were it quite fair to dwell on her thoughts as they turned to her aunt's wished-for daughter-in-law, or record in how different colours she rose before her mind from what the good dame had depicted her. Nicholas to throw himself away upon that wooden effigy -soulless-spiritless-beautyless-merely for the sake of a few of her father's gold pieces! "I cannot endure to think of it!" she murmured half audibly, looking timidly round to make quite sure that no intruder Then her ideas reverted to a topic still more painful—the was nigh. light in which the young bride might possibly view her residence with the family; and the recollection of her totally friendless and destitute condition forced tears from her eyes. Nor were they dried even in sleep, but unconsciously flowed on as fancy, still active, embodied in flitting, terrible forms, the miseries which her waking thoughts had barely suggested.

Of a far different complexion were the cogitations of Dame Flamel, when, after going through the duties of the hour, that is, repeating a good round number of Aves and Credos, she found herself in that most convenient of all places for the indulgence of a quite methodical piece of

meditation—a warm bed.

Now, the good woman knew as well, if not better than the poor girl herself, what was passing in Margot's breast; but shrewder than the latter, saw as clearly that her son did not; and having prudently refrained from opening his eyes on the subject, she now doubly applauded herself for this salutary precaution. On the whole, she was well-satisfied with her generalship that evening, as in truth she might be. She had touched right chords, and caused no disagreeable one to vibrate. In this she was not always so fortunate, or so careful; but she had a favourite plan in view, and what woman is at a loss for the means of attaining that which has once become an object with her?

She had appealed to Nicholas's filial affection—she knew it to be strong, although his manner was often cold and abstracted. She had not, as most mothers might have done, talked of preferment in life, but of leisure—not of civic honours or youthful extravagance, but of books. For she knew her boy to be the student with his whole heart—that his very soul was enwrapped in those philosophical, meditative pursuits to which his education, parentage, profession, and, above all, his sedate, thoughtful temperament naturally disposed him. She now indulged in

the pleasant anticipation of his speedy marriage with one whom she expected to bring with her the horn of abundance as a dowry; and of the happiness that would thence ensue to her son; passed in review before her mind's eye the lengthened catalogue of little comforts which such an increase would, doubtless, procure for herself; and stifling a few natural regrets that Margot was not sufficiently favoured to have been the transmitter of Fortune's gifts to the Flamel family—for, cross-grained as her manner was, she truly loved her niece—the old woman sank into a

speedy and quiet slumber.

Not so Nicholas. After carefully investigating the state of doors and windows to ascertain that the house was safe at all points—a precaution which the careful rounds of the Chevalier du Guet and his myrmidons did not render superfluous—he extinguished the fire, secured the door of this his office, and retired to the inner apartment, a large room divided in two equal compartments, one of which was the kitchen, having an issue on the passage, that the women might not disturb him when busy with a client, the other served the purposes both of study and dormitory. Placing his lamp upon the table, he paced his den with hasty, uneven strides.

Something of what his mother was so anxious to conceal from him dawned upon him that evening. It was, it is true, but an uncertain, vacillating notion, floating across his imagination; but the bare thought was enough to discompose a youth of such a retired mode of life and

modest habit of thought as his own.

Nicholas Flamel was from circumstances and temperament altogether different from what the youths of his age and station were in those noisy, turbulent times, when the disciples of Minerva partook of all the licentiousness and unruly spirit of the camp. An only child, his father had been the playmate of his childhood; and had early initiated him in the studies and speculations which were the solace of his monotonous and not very happy existence, and to the profession by which he was eventually to earn a livelihood. The boy's mind became thus prematurely tinged with a gravity beyond his years; if indeed—for he was not the child of young parents—it was not born with him.

It may be remarked, that most only children are more forward and clever, more thoughtful and less youthful in manner and feeling, than those who have many brothers and sisters to share the parental love and care, and decoy them from the society of their elders. Then, again, privation, the early consciousness of narrow circumstances, has a more blighting effect on the spirit of childhood than the unobservant may

imagine.

But whether Nicholas had been originally endowed with a buoyancy which the peculiarities of his fate had crushed and extinguished, or whether, gifted as he was with reflective powers, those of mere animal enjoyment had been curtailed, certain it is that young Flamel was old in youth, which gave a fair promise that he would be young in age.

He had for some few years before his parent's death attended one of the many establishments that crowded the quarter of the University, to perfect himself in those sciences in which his father had grounded him. The most famous of the many monastic colleges established by the different religious orders previous to the rising of the mighty Sorbonne, had been selected by old Flamel for his son, in the hope that Nicholas would there find protectors as well as teachers; as to the subsequent foundations, such as the college of Navarre, endowed by the late queen, and those of a still more recent date, the old man held them in supreme contempt. Nor were his expectations disappointed. The youth's retiring manners, sober deportment, above all, his great aptitude, preliminary study having smoothed his way not a little, soon brought him into no-He rapidly became a favourite with his superiors, and was proportionably disliked by those of his own age, to whom he could not but be an object of envy. They attempted, but in vain, to make him one of themselves, and to initiate him in the low debauchery, the disgraceful bouts and brawls in which they delighted. But the warning voice of his watchful father, his intellectual development, and perhaps, too, a natural frigidity or tardiness of temperament, preserved him from contamination; and he bore with heroic patience the jeers and taunts of his disappointed comrades.

Not a friendship, not even an intimacy sprung up between him and any of his fellow-students; but one of his monkish instructors, who had distinguished the young man from among the indocile, noisy throng, treated him with more good-will than the rest, which being met half-way by Nicholas, soon ripened into affection. No two spirits could be more congenial; for if not quite so good a Latinist as old Flamel, who had drunk deep at the source as it were, having been a pupil of the Sorbonne, the monk was well versed in mathematics, a science for which Nicholas had a natural turn, and in the still more fascinating mysteries of chemistry, in both of which branches young Flamel soon became no mean

adept.

Overwhelming was the poor youth's distress of mind when the death both of his friend-father and fatherly-friend brought his studies to a stand, and threw his aged mother and youthful cousin wholly upon his protection and exertions. Old Flamel left little property behind him but the house in which both himself and Nicholas had first seen the light, a few unfinished manuscripts, but which, being copied out to order and near completion, would, with very little additional trouble, bring in no incompetent sum, a few inconsiderable savings which his wife had hoarded up with incredible care and foresight, and a more plentiful stock of materials for his trade than of clients. The monk left him the few but valuable works he possessed, as well as those compiled by himself on the

subject they both preferred.

Nicholas, born and bred a clerk or scrivener, had never entertained a notion of changing profession. Indeed, it was then usual for most sons to follow closely in the footsteps of their fathers, and old Flamel's business, though not of a kind to make him rich, had sufficed to the limited wants of his family. But a concurrence of unfavourable circumstances made the pursuit a less thriving one to Nicholas. The art of writing, although yet in its infancy, and hitherto altogether confined to the clerical part of the community, and the scriveners by profession, had become, by the institution of so many colleges, diffused among a greater number of men, whose necessities drove them to make the same use of their talent as himself. Thus rivals sprang up on all sides, who, if not such classic Latinists as himself, knew quite enough to draw up agree-

ments in an intelligible and valid form, and though not such perfect masters of caligraphy, were able, for that very reason, to copy out more quickly the desired book; for until the introduction of printing in the ensuing century, libraries, scanty enough as may be imagined, were entirely formed of manuscripts, on the decoration of which such care and talent were bestowed that the large sums they cost seem triding when compared with the labour necessary to their completion. True, nowhere could be found a more discreet confidant for a secret correspondence, which the skill of the parties did not enable them to carry on themselves, than Nicholas; but whether from not being sufficiently known, or that his reserve and bashfulness were obstacles in his path, certainly affairs did not thrive with him as they had done with his father; and if the family had never yet been very well to do in the world, they were now likely to do a great deal worse—a prospect which the mother was in the habit of alluding to, and enlarging upon, more frequently than was altogether agreeable to her son's feelings.

That a young man thus circumstanced and educated should hitherto have thought but little, if at all, of the other sex, is but natural. His delicate constitution, tried by a forced application, the peculiar turn of his mind, and strange as it may seem, his professional avocations, were so many shields against the shafts of love; for although we have no means of ascertaining how far the authors of that day were justified in so treating the fairer portion of mankind, the most unmitigated contempt and cynic raillery breathe in all their tençons, lays, and romances

which have descended to their posterity.

It was, however, impossible but, as the cousins shot up to riper years, whilst Margot showed herself so sensible of his merits, he should, at the same time, become aware of her growing beauty; indeed, the notice of others, even of perfect strangers, must have drawn his attention to it. Her bright form ever hovering around him, her joyous voice ever ringing in his ear, relieved the darkness and silence of his home, and made him, instinctively, alive to the charm of her presence. Then she was dependent upon him alone, having no other friend who could or would assist her; this was a strong tie between them, and one which he had from the first proudly acknowledged.

Thus, without actually arriving at any conclusion, he thought more frequently of his fair cousin than she imagined. Her image floated across his mind connected with vague notions of the future, so that when his mother began to speak of marriage, although it at first startled him, and threw him, like a frightened colt, off the course, he gradually familiarised himself with the thought, never entertaining the slightest doubt but she was alluding to Margot all the while, and finding nothing displeasing in the proposition, he let matters quietly take their course, convinced that all would come right at the proper time, and that there was no need of hurry, care, or even thought, so far as he was concerned.

From that drowsy security the disclosure of Dame Flamel's views that evening, and Margot's visible emotion, had roused him to a perturbation of spirit altogether new, and most oppressive. He was now, for the first time in his life, placed in a critical situation—compelled to judge for himself in a matter not of passing importance, but which was to decide his fate. The Catholic Church declares such a step irrevocable. At

that period especially, she would not sanction a sometimes necessary separation, and the home affections are of even more vital moment to the

lowly than to the great.

Of Pernelle Blanchard, the rich changer's daughter, although he had seen much, he knew but little, never having, according to his own admission, taken the trouble to think about her at all. She was, so far as the undefined, general impression he had of her permitted him to judge, a pretty, unobtrusive, young girl, marked by no trait sufficiently characteristic to fix her on his mind. Their acquaintance dated some few months back, when the young scribe had come in contact with her father in the way of his occupation. Blanchard had proved himself a more generous patron than ordinary; not only introducing Nicholas to his family, but permitting his daughters, occasionally, to form part of the youth's domestic circle. Dame Flamel had eagerly grasped at the prospect which this opening afforded her ambition; and Margot, until the quiet preference of Pernelle for her cousin became obvious even to her inexperience, had found much pleasure in the companionship. was no sooner aware of her aunt's hopes, and of Pernelle's inclinations, than all her liking for the changer's three daughters was at once obliterated, and gave way to sentiments the most opposed to friendliness. As she could by no means account to herself, far less to others, for this change of feeling, she prudently concealed it; steadfastly refusing, however, all the little gifts by which her wealthy young acquaintances sought to console her for the rigour of fortune.

Nicholas had remarked something of this growing coolness between Margot and Pernelle; but was very far from conjecturing how much he was concerned in it. Convinced by all he read that women cared for little in the other sex but good looks, and conscious of his own deficiences in this respect, he was long blind to the affection of two artless young creatures, who were ready to receive favourably his slightest advances. But now, enlightened by his mother's remarks on the one hand, and his own observation on the other, he plainly saw how matters stood; that the choice rested with himself as to who should be the future com-

panion of his life.

The mere thought conjured up the fascinating Margot before him, and thus his heart seemed to speak its decision clearly enough. But reason and duty battled bravely the field; and when he considered how unenviable would be Margot's lot as well as his own in the event of their union, and how much compliance with his mother's wishes would contribute to the happiness of her remaining days, he felt more and more perplexed.

Pondering thus on the present and the future, Nicholas spent the long night, until, dropping from his stool with sheer mental fatigue, his thoughts became an indescribable chaos, in which the beautiful Margot and Pernelle, with her habitual, calm smile, appeared alternately before

him.

III.

THE matin peals broke Nicholas's disturbed rest; but the temporary relief he had snatched from thought by no means dispelled his embarrassment. He sought in vain to arrive at a final decision; the pros and cons VOL. XXIII.

which ever rise in legion to the mind when the natural and the reflective

impulses are opposed, contended equally for mastery.

He felt oppressed with the smoke of his expiring lamp, and threw open the casement. The morning freshness revived him; and the sound of the church bells, cheerfully responding to each other throughout the town, and wafted over the water from the city and the university, reminding him that the coming day was Sunday, diverted his ideas into a new channel.

Strange as it may seem, in those days, when the grossest superstition disgraced the human intellect, and when hierarchy was all powerful, there reigned among those who were struggling towards intellectual light a spirit of the most revolting scepticism. This spirit existed chiefly in the monastic establishments themselves, and among the brawling students who swarmed the quarter of the university. As to the chivalry and unlettered bourgeoisie, they were, in this particular, as in all else, distinct from the clerical class, the former especially scorning all approach to learning, and, therefore, remaining free from the taint of its seminaries. With this taint, however, Nicholas had not been infected. The friendly intercourse that had existed between him and the good old monk who had been his chief instructor, the early lessons of his mother, and the chances that had limited him in after years—and those the most decisive as to determining the tendency of his character-to a narrow domestic circle, and to the influence of female domination, these causes had combined to maintain in young Flamel the simplicity of character in general, and of faith in particular, which was wanting in most youths of his age He clung to every, even the smallest detail of his creed; and college. and performed its minutest duties with an eager punctuality that often put his fair cousin to the blush.

The resolution, therefore, at which he finally arrived in this instance partook not only of the colour of his epoch, but of that of his own mind; and was, doubtless, inspired by the chimes, to which he had for some

time been listening.

Heaven itself shall decide for me since I cannot, thought he, and a clear understanding with myself upon this point is necessary to guide my behaviour towards all parties. I will look about me at the morning mass, where we must all meet, for some token which will, I doubt not, be granted to my prayer, and then, whichever way it point, I shall rest satisfied that in conducting my course accordingly I choose the only path

which it is right to pursue.

And if Heaven vouchsafe no token, whispered reason, as Nicholas tried to shake the chill of care from his heart, and the effects of a sleepless might from his person?—then, answered simplicity, nothing shall make me move one step further in the affair. A nervous qualm passed over the youth as he thought of the maternal storms, in that case, to be encountered; but though, generally, the most dutiful, nay, from sheer abstraction, sometimes the most passive of sons, when Nicholas roused himself from his usual apathy, to the degree of forming any fixed determination, not all his mother's efforts could move him from it.

When the family met, at an early breakfast, they refrained from allusion to the agitating topic of the eve, and prepared for church with an appearance of easy indifference most alien to their feelings. The mother

remarked, however, her son's visible and growing emotion as he neared St. Jaques, a slight hesitation causing him to pause awhile in the porch; but respect for the time and place shielded him from questions he might

have found it difficult to parry.

The church was oppressively crowded, and Nicholas with some difficulty found place for himself and his companions. Mass not having yet begun, the eyes of the faithful roved rather investigatingly about, and Margot's mean attire, which bespoke both the lowness of her condition and the hardships of fortune, could not screen her from a degree of observation too marked not to attract the notice of her friends. Nicholas could not help feeling gratified that one belonging to him should make so favourable a sensation; and his own eyes rested on that familiar and lovely countenance with more pleasure and with deeper interest than ordinary. Pernelle sat at no great distance off, in such a position as immediately to face him; and as he gazed now on the one, now on the other, the contrast between them struck him more forcibly than it had ever done before.

Pernelle's form had none of the rich, lofty proportions which distin-Of middle stature, her figure was girlish and undeguished Margot's. termined; and with features delicate and well shaped, good eyes and complexion, there was yet something that marred, in her face, so many Whether the fault lay in the faintness of tint-for claims to beauty. she was unusually blond-or whether it might be traced to a composure of mien that approached rigidity, it would be difficult to decide; but there certainly was something either too much or too little. Beyond a faint blush, which for a moment suffused her cheek when Nicholas and his party first came in sight, the keenest observer could not have traced the slightest token of recognition, far less of emotion. Vainly did her sisters peer into her calm eyes for some intelligence as they perceived Nicholas frequently glance their way; her looks were intently fixed on the ground, not to be removed thence, as they well knew, till mass was

Not so poor Margot, whose bright animated face breathed the words she dare not speak, for Dame Flamel maintained a severe discipline on

all these occasions.

It is, perhaps, fair to state, that whilst Nicholas looked once towards Pernelle, to discover the expected token, he looked twice at Margot; yet look as he would, for some time no heavenly manifestation became visible. But, suddenly, as his attention was turned towards the priest who was just then ascending the steps of the altar, the sun, bursting through clouds that had that morning obscured it, streamed in bright effulgence through the stained windows, shedding rich and varied tints on the lofty columns and tessellated pavement of the church, and checkering the persons of the congregation.

Flamel's eye at that moment chanced accidentally to light upon Pernelle. Through the window opposite which she knelt the sun shone full upon her, tinting with greater brilliancy the pale gold of her hair, exposed by the partial derangement of her hood, and shedding a radiance over the snowy hues of her countenance. In her present attitude, with hands gently clasped and raised in prayer, her face upturned, filled with an expression of unutterable meekness and purity, her whole person seemed

invested with a hitherto unperceived charm. Nicholas's glance rested awhile well pleased upon her; then, obeying a sudden impulse, he turned

to look at his Cousin Margot.

The window through which the rays streamed upon Pernelle was behind her, and consequently threw her person into shade; and Flamel, blinded by the intensity of light, could scarcely trace the outline of her form as it stood in dark relief against the golden ground. This circumstance, trivial as it was, made a deep impression upon him in the superstitious mood of that hour. He had implored a token from above, and it had been vouchsafed. Heaven itself pointed out the chosen vessel of his happiness-Pernelle, and no other, was destined to bring the joys of a sanctified affection to his home. The decree of Heaven tallied with the maternal injunction and the dictates of prudence; there was no doubt or hesitation left on his mind; Pernelle must be his wife, and he gazed on her with strange feelings as he thought that their after years were to be blended, and their hearts, as yet estranged, fated to become one. Mass had proceeded some time ere his mother was successful in making him aware of the singular breach of decorum of which he was guilty, so tumultuous and confused indeed were his sensations that he could with difficulty attend to the solemnity of the hour.

When service was over, and the people thronged towards the porch, it was customary with those who had but little leisure to seek their friends during the week, to avail themselves of this opportunity to exchange greetings and to devise some pleasant way of spending the day together. Blanchard and his daughters were in the habit of tarrying under the porch for the Flamels, when they had not actually met in the church; and Nicholas now approached the group with a far livelier interest than he had ever before experienced, though his manner was even more reserved than usual, being more than ordinarily timid from the consciousness that the scrutinising eyes of his mother and cousin were upon him.

Vain were the kind endeavours of Blanchard and the sprightly raillery of his eldest and youngest daughters to thaw his icy humour; and whilst Dame Flamel noted this circumstance with displeasure, poor Margot drew from it the most fallacious inferences; nor had she any opportunity during the remainder of the day, which, according to their wont, they spent together, of discovering the real state of Nicholas's feelings towards Pernelle. Nevertheless, from that morning, without being able to discern any visible alteration in her cousin's manner, all hope died within her breast; her young spirit was chilled; there was another void in her already dull existence, which appeared more colourless with every coming day as the sun rose and set without bringing the slightest change to her position.

LODGING-HUNTING AND LODGING-PROVING.

"OH! the troubles and tribulations of this life," groaned Sally Coates, of gossip notoriety (the washing had gone wrong, the firewood was damp, and she was suffering under an accumulated sense of misery)-"oh! the troubles and tribulations of this life," she repeated, "that I have gone through—a burying of my husband—and things! There I had to put up with his being 'down' for three years, till he became, poor lamb, quite a nutrophy, and at length went off in a 'sumption!" These reflections of Sally's on the nature of tribulations came sounding back on mine ears somewhat ridiculously as I toiled patiently and devotedly by the side of my friend, Miss Jones, round the dim fog regions of Harley, Wimpole, St. Anne, and other streets, in the dull, respectable locality of Cavendish-square, looking out for that most difficult article to be obtained even in luxurious London-good, clean, cheap, and respectable lodgings. They were to be taken, too, for a lady spinster of a certain age, with her friend, Miss Jones, as her representative. Miss Jones had evidently had a geographical chart of territories confided to her, as well as a running scale of expenses commuted by the price of rooms as offered for hire in the neighbourhood of the little market-town I arrived at this conclusion by the palpable ambition she manifested for first-floor rooms, bayed windows, extra cleanliness, and good views; but the sudden drop of the countenance as she heard, four, five, and six guineas a week asked for these extravagances, convinced me at once that they did not come under the denominated order. At length, after much manœuvring, I gleaned from her that her friend, Miss White, had not authorised her to give more than two or three guineas per week for lodging, which sum was also to include all items. I put her, therefore, on another tack, namely, that of stating our errand at the various doors ere we entered them, somewhat after this fashion: "Wanted a couple of bedrooms and one good sitting-room for two gentlewomen, rent not to exceed two guineas per week, plate, linen, and attendance, included." This beat, however, proved even more unsuccessful than our former one. Lodging-house women stood frowning down upon us from the door-steps, assuring us, "They could not think of letting their rooms at such a price." Others with black net caps, encrusted with dirt, and trimmed with indescribably little filthy flowers that appeared to have sprung from the soil; with withered and hag-like faces, kept pressing us to walk in, assuring us, "that they had rooms that would just suit us;" till following on their track up close foul smelling staircases, and glancing in at doors that were evidently entrances to shut-up state apartments; we found ourselves ushered into small, uncomfortable, dingy rooms, with the breath almost shaken out of us with our ascent, and our lowering guide glancing at us with keen money-making eyes, as though she was already taking measurement of our probable extent of pocket funds. It was evidently no go! Miss Jones groaned audibly as we found ourselves again on the pavement, and could hardly be persuaded to proceed. I remembered, however, the old saying, "that patience and water-gruel will even cure the gout," and as we had just arrived at a turning, I persuaded Miss Jones to try the house over the way, where "Lodgings to let" were conspicuously placed forward in the window, whilst I explored the territory of the new street. Here a large, dull, roomy-looking house took my attention; there was the sign-telling board in the window, and a woman was industriously sweeping the door-step. On my inquiries within, I was referred to "the Missis," a tall comely-looking woman, evidently of the better class. She looked like some small hotel-keeper's wife, or better-educated lodging woman. Her ground-floor was to be let, consisting of a very good sitting-room and bedroom, and there was another large roomy bedroom above, but you had to climb past a young

painter's apartments on the second floor ere you came to it.

The rooms looked large and comfortable. Mrs. Joseph (the landlady) was all smiles and promises, and the entire rent was not to exceed two guineas and a half per week. Decidedly I had at last had a stroke of good fortune. Promising to call again, I hurried back to Miss Jones. She was standing outside the house I had left her near, having had evidently an angry discussion with the lodging-house woman. As I came up the door was slammed violently in her face, and she was left planted. hardly knew what to say to her, for she was all but weeping with rage and vexation. "Fancy that low, vulgar, stupid creature to speak so to me. My dear, I had looked at the rooms, and I thought they would suit pretty well, and the rent was not too high, and all that, you know, and I was just leaving, and had taken the address, and told the woman I would consider of it, when she turned round on me, and said she could not think of taking me in without a 'reference.' I thought, of course, she wanted Miss White's address, which I gave her, when she all but flung it back in my face, saying 'She did not want to know where I came from, neither did she care, but she must have a reference for my respectability ere I entered her house.' Well, my dear, I felt getting angry, you may be sure, but I spoke up, and said if she wanted to know anything about me or Miss White, she was quite welcome to make inquiries of our good pastor, Mr. Smith-when what do you think of her impertinence? She said 'She did not want to be humbugged about any Mr. Smiths. If I could give her a reference in town, well and good; if not, I had better go about my business; that she was a poor lone widow, with her bread to get, and was not going to be taken in by any such creatures as me, she could tell me.' Fancy, my dear, my being so insulted." And Miss Jones was again on the very verge of tears.

Well, it was a case of necessity; so after cheering her as best I could with little contemptuous epithets against the offending party, such as "A poor ignorant creature, that evidently does not know a lady when she sees one!—must have been half drunk to have spoken to you so!" &c., I led the way back to the house I had come from, which, to my great delight, appeared to please Miss Jones au coup d'æil. All was here couleur de rose. Even that ambitiously-placed bedroom, that had to be reached over the painter's head at the risk of a steep stone staircase and iron balustrade, had the tact to find its way at once to her favourable approbation. Did not it possess light, and air, and size, and, above everything, those beautiful store-closets, the keys of which were to be placed at her own disposal? The bargain was, therefore, concluded, the lodgings taken for a month, and Miss Jones and I parted, mutually pleased with

our day's research, I carrying off her strenuous promise to write me a full account of how she and her friend liked the lodgings as soon as they had been in them long enough, as she said, "to feel comfortable and settled." I hope, therefore, I am not breaking her confidence in transcribing the letter I received from her about a fortnight afterwards.

LODGING PROVING.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—As we have been here now some time, I suppose I ought to be thinking of redeeming my promise to you, which, as you seem so kindly interested in us, will, I think, be best carried out by

giving you extracts from the Diary I have kept:

"Monday, Nov. 1.—Started with Miss White for London. Saw a month's provision of grocery earefully packed away to take with us, as we were informed living was so dear in London to what it is in the country, Miss White (as my senior in age) giving me many kindly hints on the journey. She says, we must take every one to be rogues in London, and never carry a purse in our pockets, or we are sure to be robbed. En route, we made a calculation of our probable expenses, and

congratulated ourselves that we should have little to buy.

"Arrived at the station, we were most unceremoniously seized upon and conveyed to a cab. I however made my escape, leaving Miss White to keep guard over our cloaks and wraps, whilst I substituted a search for our boxes, which having found them, I sat upon them to secure them according to my usual custom till I could get somebody to attend to me. Having agreed as to the price of the cab, we started for the lodgings—but of course were taken in after all—the man making us pay extra for our luggage. (N.B.—I have taken his number.) Arrived here, we found a blazing fire with tea and wax-lights awaiting us. Miss White and I agreed to say nothing that evening, but to set our housekeeping right on the morrow. Accordingly, for the present, we had our box of groceries placed under Miss White's bed for security, and retired to rest.

" Tuesday, Nov. 2 .- I woke with the broad sun shining in upon me, and springing up hastily rung the bell. Whilst waiting for an answer, was rather startled by hearing a man's voice talking loudly in the next room. I listened to hear whom he was talking to, but could only catch the same voice now raised high, and now half muttering, as though he were tossing about in a nightmare. Getting alarmed, I rung the bell quickly a second time. It was answered by a half-dressed sleepy maid, wishing to know "What I wanted?" Inquired anxiously who slept in the next room, and was told it was only an eccentric bachelor who had a habit of talking to himself, warranted harmless. (N.B.—To lock my door.) Having requested hot water, was informed that it was not more than eight o'clock yet, and nobody was up. Accomplished dressing under difficulties, and descended to Miss White, whom I found up and dressed, but getting nervous and irritable over having rung so often for breakfast without an answer. Was informed by the maid in excuse, that the painter had indulged in a small evening party which had kept them up so late they had overslept themselves. The same thing happened, however, at dinner, when the unconscionable man desired his boots to be cleaned for him just as the cloth was being spread on the table. Succeeded in getting all the groceries stowed away in the store

closets in my room, by dint of several fatiguing journies up that steep stone staircase, and having walked with dear Miss White for a couple of hours up and down the street to look in at the shops, was not sorry when evening came on. (N.B.—Did not forget to lock my bedroom door this time.)

" Wednesday, Nov. 3 .- Aroused this morning by a violent knocking at what I thought was my door; found at last it was my neighbour's, the eccentric gentleman's instead. At last it seemed to give way beneath the force of battery, and I heard a sound as of breakfast being carried After ringing again several times, the maid appeared, when I begged to know the reason of the confusion. Was told the gentleman had locked his door last night for fear I might walk into his room by mistake, and could not succeed in unfastening it this morning when he wanted his breakfast brought in. I went down stairs, feeling rather uncomfortable under the impression that there must be something wrong in my demeanour for people to entertain such erroneous ideas-noticed that the butter had disappeared most rapidly, and the table-cloth was none of On inquiry was told all the butter had been used for cookthe cleanest. ing our dinner yesterday, and the painter "gent" had had the cloth for his supper, as his was sent to the wash. As we had had some beautiful game for dinner the day before, Miss White suggested that the bones would stew nicely into broth or soup of some kind, but was surprised by the cook's absolutely refusing to do any such thing for us. "She had not been used to such beggarly ways-if we wanted soup, let us get proper stock for it, she wasn't going to bother with any such messes." Being early days we thought it best not to quarrel, but were secretly tempted to wish ourselves back once more in the country.

" Thursday, Nov. 4.—On descending to breakfast, found the whole house and street enveloped in a kind of dense, dirty yellow vapourgazed upon ourselves and our bilious yellow-ochre complexions with feelings indescribable-looking out upon the street, was surprised to see lights burning in all the shop-windows, and figures like dim murky shades moving in and out. Was told that this was a veritable London fog, and might continue all day. To us, after the clear country, it appeared so thick and dense we thought we might have cut it and spread it on our bread and butter-were relieved, however, from our blue devils by receiving a note from our friend Dr. Allen, telling us he would call upon us and take tea this evening. After immense trouble procured ourselves a clean table-cloth for the occasion, and imported some muffins, having secured the boiling of the tea-kettle by causing it to be brought up-stairs and placed on our own fire. Found Dr. Allen looking as fresh and jovial as ever, but were alarmed by his informing us that he had heard Mr. and Mrs. Joseph were fearfully involved in debt, and that he should not be surprised by an execution being placed in the house any day; he advised us, therefore, to keep our things packed together in our boxes, so that they might be moved on the shortest notice, as in the event of such a thing happening when we were in the house, they would otherwise be forfeited. He made us both quite nervous, and when he left us shortly after ten, we agreed to sleep together for company. We were, however, roused about one or two o'clock by a most tremendous noise in the house, and having succeeded in ringing up the servant, were informed it was only master coming home a little late, and it appeared he had

taken a drop or so too much.

" Friday, Nov. 5 .- After breakfast, Miss White asked me if I had observed how late the servants were in making the beds and setting the rooms to rights, and we agreed it was best to speak about it; just then, Miss Charlotte Joseph, a child of twelve, put a rough head of curl-papers into the room, and informed us, "Mamma had got a sick head-ache, and should feel much obliged if we would lend her a book to read.' her a volume of the Rev. Dr. Smith's Sermons, but the child soon returned it, saying 'Mamma would be glad of a novel instead.' Not having this for her, she sat coolly down without being asked, and then proceeded to enter into conversation with us-this consisted of several little particulars, viz., 'That Mary, the maid, had told mamma how angry we were about the noise last night when papa came in so late and merry; and that mamma said we were two scandalous creatures, for she was sure it was not at all more respectable for us to keep a gentleman here till near eleven o'clock at night, than for papa to come into his own house when he liked, and so she should tell us.' We then learnt also, that Sarah had said, 'She was sure she never saw such shabby housekeeping in all her life, and that when missis did not get up till twelve, she did not see why she was to be called up every morning before eight to wait on us.' Miss Charlotte then diverged from this theme to tell us what a grand house theirs was in the Exhibition time. How mamma would dine twenty people, and so many foreigners amongst them, in one room of a day; and didn't she and her brother and sisters only feast on the jellies and sweets when they came out—they might put their fingers into anything!' Miss Charlotte evidently liked the foreigners—she said they were so nice and familiar, had no pride about them. They would call her to them, and kiss her, and talk such a lot of French to her, and they would walk into her papa and mamma's room when they were in bed, and all over the house, and think nothing of it. Oh! they were such clever creatures those 'Mounseers,' her mamma said, they were so sorry to lose them-nothing had paid so well since'-here Miss Charlotte said she heard her mamma's bell, and so suddenly left us.

" Saturday, Nov. 6.—As this was the last day of the week, Miss White proposed that we should call in all our little accounts and settle them. This operation, however, was a much longer one than we had anticipated, as Mary had forgotten to desire them to be brought in on that day. She was, therefore, obliged to retrieve her neglect by running with little messages to that effect up and down the street, as we'l as she could glean time between answering all the house bells, carrying in all the house dinners, cleaning all the shoes, and attending to all the house wants. However, about six in the evening, we managed to get them all collected till the house bill coming in, we found various articles inserted there that had also made their appearance in the regular accounts. Odd half-pounds of butter, extra milk, scraps of grocery, &c. Our beginning to look into these items, however, appeared to make confusion worse confounded, Mary and Sarah (our 'attendance') stood before us contradicting each other volubly. 'I am sure now, Mary, you got that 'Yes, but I tell you it was for the painter young man.' 'Are you sure it was not for missis?' 'Well then, I won't say, but swee

enough I got it; the other, perhaps, was for them.' Not being much enlightened by this reasoning, we dismissed them, desiring for the future that nothing we did not order might be taken in for us; and requesting to see the 'Missis.' She came in as usual, all smiles and graciousness—'Hoped we were pleased and comfortable.' 'No.' 'Oh! she was surprised at that; she had never heard complaints before; to be sure her plate was only platina, but then what could you expect for the rent we gave? Was the linen all in holes? Indeed, she was very sorry to hear it, but her servants should look to it; could not think how we found it so dirty; was afraid it got mixed up with the young painter-gentleman's sometimes; was sorry, indeed, we should ring so often, but just now they had so many lodgers to attend to; hoped we should be more comfortable soon. Lady S——, and Lord and Lady B——, had all been staying with her, and she had never heard any complaints before; indeed, she was proud to say she had always given satisfaction.' And Mrs. Joseph, more smiling and courteous than ever, swept curtseying out of the room.

"Now, my dear friend, I am sure you will say I have given you quite a page from our lodging history; I wish I could tell you that 'Missis' had redeemed her promises of improvement—but, alas!—we have still ten more days to linger on here, where we live in hopes that fresh clean country air, and simple country manners, will help to efface from our memories this our town trial of lodging hunting and lodging proving.

" Yours (in difficulty),

" SUSANNA JONES."

SAN JOSÉ.

(ROUGH NOTES FROM MY DIARY.)

By Joseph Anthony, Jun.

STOCKTON has at present no, or few, brick buildings, but, like San Francisco, many spacious and even elegant wooden structures, and wide handsome streets, which, admirably planned, present a bustling, business-like appearance, whilst the country round, with its green level sward and fine timber, at once reminds an Englishman of the well-wooded parks in his own far-away land; the climate is even superior to that of the Bay City. have the same clear sky and cheering sunshine, without the extremely cold evenings and mornings, which, in their almost sudden transitions, form the greatest drawbacks on the comforts of life in San Francisco. Stockton boasts two newspapers—the Republican and the Journal; the former being the organ of the Democratic, and the latter the organ of the Whig party. Both publications display much talent; the Republican is now publishing a very interesting series of papers on the mines, their first discovery, and the events connected with their subsequent working, written by Carson, one of the early adventurers, and from whom Carson's Creek takes its name. During my sojourn in Stockton, I became acquainted with the most gentlemanlike American I have yet met, Judge Root, who is young, amiable, and talented, a rising man, and one, I have but little doubt, who is destined to obtain a prominent position in the American political world.

I had resolved upon not again entrusting myself, on my return, to the same steamer which had brought me to Stockton, but, as ill-luck would have it, on the day of my departure, my entertainer's hospitality, which prompted him to detain me to the last moment, caused me to lose the other boats which had started, and I was again compelled to take passage by the Santa Clara. Seeing me hesitate to go on board, the captain assured me there was no likelihood of her being again three days on the voyage, as he purposed steering her himself. In three hours after quitting Stockton, we were fast on a sand-bank; in three hours after, we were afloat again, and I retired to rest about eleven, fully expecting the morrow would see us at the Bay City. About day-break I awoke from a sleep which a full cabin of passengers, talking and playing cards, had failed to interrupt, and proceeding to the deck, found the Santa Clara, not in San Francisco's Bay, but high and almost entirely dry on a bed of huge rushes. Yes, we were fast again, and had been so all night. We were fast for the day; at least until the returning full-tide, which did not float us until four o'clock-the interim being filled up by the passengers as they best could find sources of amusement. For my part I joined a small party fishing over the stern of the vessel, which lay in a few feet of water, and here, with lines of common string and rude hooks, baited with bits of beef, we drew up fish of all sizes almost ad libitum. The dullness was also considerably relieved by the amusing freaks of a German captain, who had by his eccentricity afforded considerable amusement until it was discovered that he was something more than odd and eccentric, being, in reality, downright crazy—a revelation that would have been accompanied by a tragedy, had not a Mr. Torrey, a San Francisco merchant, had his suspicions excited, watched him closely, and by throwing his arms round, prevented the poor fellow from leaping over-From all I could gather, this man's madness was caused by the sudden acquisition of great wealth. He had made some very fortunate speculations, and in his madness, generous to an extreme, he had offered to several of the passengers loans and gifts of money.

In this country, where there is so much excitement, insanity is common, the cases generally pertaining to the gain or loss of gold. Some short time ago, a man was seen for a week to take up his post daily at the corner of one of the streets running into the Plaza, apparently on the look-out for some one he was expecting. Through the live-long day he stood, never deserting his post for a moment until night came; and at length, when asked his business, he replied, that he was waiting for the man who was there to bring him twenty millions of dollars. On the hillside, a little above the cottage in which I am writing this, only yesterday I observed a man standing looking with earnest gaze towards the shipping. It was early in the morning when I first observed him; he was dressed something above the garb of the labouring class, and over his arm, although the height of summer, was thrown a heavy winter-coat. Morn, noon, the unclouded meridian sun, pouring down rays of almost scorching heat, fell upon him where all unsheltered he stood, but he moved not, not for a moment did he turn his gaze from the quarter to which it was directed when I first beheld him; his attitude still the same, one foot being placed on a wooden railing against which he was leaning, and his body bent forward, as though to assist his gaze on the distant

objects on which it appeared to be set. The day passed away, but it was only when the shades of night were stealing over the hill-side that he moved, and then he slowly descended the hill towards the town, but not without frequently stopping, looking back, as though he could scarcely tear himself away from the spot, and thus casting many a long, lingering look behind, he disappeared in the deepening gloom, and I saw him no more. Whether this poor fellow was also waiting for the man with the millions of dollars, I know not, but that he was insane I had little reason to doubt.

After passing through Suisan Bay and entering the San Joquin river, the voyage to Stockton has but little to interest. The shores, for the chief part, consist of bare tableland, with a distant yet bold background of hills, conspicuous amongst which is Mount Diabolo, presenting a not very dissimilar appearance to the Monmouthshire Sugar-Loaf. Mount Diabolo, which, by the way, is said to abound with Grizzlies, may very

distinctly be seen from San Francisco, as well as from Stockton.

San José, once the seat of the legislature, to which place it was removed from Vallejo, and from whence it has been again removed to Sacramento, is destined for further transportation, in consequence of the members being flooded out in their first session. San José is a highly interesting place to visit, being one of the old mission, and having a numerous mixed population of Americans, Spaniards, Mexicans, and When I paid the place a visit, instead of the stagenative Californians. coach, I took the steamer, which I was given to understand would land me at Union City, from which place a conveyance for San José would be The morning of my departure was, as they usually are here, sunshiny, exhilarating; and the trip over the merry-looking waters was most delightful. At the time of my making the excursion I had not thoroughly recovered from the severe illness which all new-comers are destined to undergo here, and little disposed for conversation, I sought a part of the steamer where I might recline, and, basking in the sunshine, inhale the invigorating breeze. But I was not allowed to remain long undisturbed. A long, raw-boned fellow came and seated himself near, at the same time intimating that he was disposed to enter into conversation, by observing, that "he guessed that was about the pleasantest location in the hull vessel." I made no reply, and my gentleman, finding that I was not disposed to talk, vacated the place, which was, however, soon occupied by another, whose appearance was something more favour-He came to ask the loan of the newspaper I had laid beside me, which having received, he became absorbed in its contents, leaving me undisturbed to my thoughts. California is pre-eminently the place for faces indicative of eventful lives. Here, where a man lives, as it were, a life-time in a month—where trials, joys, and sorrows follow each other in rapid succession, and continual excitement lights the eye with almost unnatural fire, leaving strong marks of passage on the brow -here is a field for the physiognomist. I looked upon the man's face who was reading the paper by my side. I interpreted the characters written in his countenance as telling of much adventure by flood and field, of self-reliance and fearless daring. Was it so? I would speak to him, and learn his history. He had been a miner; three times had made his pile, and three times lost it. Once he had been robbed of his all by a false friend in whom he had trusted, and who, instead of turning

the gold-dust they had accumulated together into coin, and then dividing it, had taken steamer from San Francisco with all the treasure. A second time he made his pile, and, leaving the miners, had arrived at the Bay City, purposing to embark for the old country, the old home, his old mother; but he had unfortunately entered one of the many gambling-rooms in the city, won the first night, lost the next—the spell was upon him, he could not give it up—and lost all his hard-earned gains. This had occurred twelve months ere he told me his story: he had returned to the mines, been fortunate, made his pile again, and had again lost it; lost it, too, as before, at the gambling-table.

"It is no use, sir," said he to me, in concluding his narration, "I am

never to see the old country again-it's my fate."

Well, Napoleon was a fatalist, and there was little to wonder at in the rough miner becoming one also in the midst of his misfortunes and the

wreckings of his long-cherished hopes.

It was about mid-day when we landed at Union City, which I found to consist of nothing more nor less than a large, straggling wooden building, used partly as a stable, partly as a store of produce from the ranches in the neighbourhood, destined for transition to San Francisco by the steamer which had brought us thither; and which, by-the-way, I should have mentioned bore also the name of the place-namely, the Here we found the conveyance for San José awaiting us-Union City. a long, narrow, four-wheeled waggon; the team, four Californian horses, which seemed as though but yesterday reclaimed from their native wilds, whilst their harness was a combination of knotted ropes and very antiquated and particularly fragile-looking leather. In good keeping, however, was all this with the driver-a copper-coloured, half-savage looking genius, whose coal-black eyes flashed fiery bright beneath his elf locks and huge battered sombrero, as he pulled and hauled and shrieked again at his cattle, whilst he strove to bring them to something like obedience. Well, at length we were all seated—about a dozen of us—the luggage stowed beneath our feet, bringing more than one pair of knees in nearer proximity to the nasal part of the same proprietor's organisation than was altogether elegant. Whoop, whoop!-vamos and away we went.

It was a fair start; our driver shouted like a maniac, and his cattle pulled like fiends. The road was greensward, and, save that it was strewed with tall, dry stems of wild mustard, which cracked and fell before us, level as a bowling-green. We were doing at least twelve miles an hour, and at that rate had proceeded some five hundred yards, when, lo! one of the leaders suddenly deciding upon a retrograde movement, turned sharply round, and the rein, pulled by the vigorous arm of our Jehu to restrain him, breaking in his hands, round we went; smash went the shafts, the horses began to rear and plunge, and out we all scrambled, displaying considerable more alacrity in our exit than had characterised our entrances. Various were the suggestions made as to the best course to pursue under the circumstances; and after an ineffectual attempt to splice the broken shaft, our conductor decided upon abandoning the wagon for another of similar build, save that it was destitute of springs, and which, at the time of the disaster, chanced to be passing, on its way to Union City, laden with cabbages, potatoes, &c. Accordingly, we awaited the cargo's discharge at the city, or rather wooden building; and on its return, the seats being transferred, we took our places, and away once more we sped over the plains, at some six miles an hour. There was now an addition to the concomitants of our locomotion, in a very regular motion of the wagon, arising from its not possessing springs—and that was a most unmistakeable bumping. The vehicle was strongly built, or it could not possibly have long kept together; and we were all obliged to be very careful, or equally impossible would it have been for us to have kept our places in it. Holding firmly on, however, all was right, and thus we sped along.

Notwithstanding the severe bumping, it was a delightful ride; the day was gloriously fine, whilst there was something in the atmosphere which operated upon one's spirits like magic—exhilarating as wine. And then the country, was it not new, fresh almost to civilisation? Were we not galloping over plains where yet roamed antelope and elk? and, bounding the vast sweep of rich country o'er which we journeyed, could we not see majestic mountains, where white man's foot had never trod—the haunts of the Grizzlies, and where yet the panther, wolf, and

lion roamed, in all the savageness of their nature, wild.

Occasionally, as we journeyed along, we came upon ranches; some of them displaying farming of the first order; others, Spanish, quite the reverse; and the latter being easily known by the state of the fencing, as well as the general appearance of slovenliness around the crazy-looking tenements which they inhabited, and with which, extremely dirty as I am told they are in the interior, they are quite contented, caring for nothing only to live and do as little labour as possible. We now and then met some of these Spanish settlers, with their fondness for fine gay colours in dress, always preknown objects at a distance in a landscape, and on nearer approach still objects of interest, with their large dark eyes, and fantastical ornaments with which they are decked. We did not see a single Spaniard on foot during the journey. They may be said almost to live on horseback; and you meet none of them on the plains who carries not with him a lasso at his saddle-bow.

For some dozen miles the land over which we passed was cultivated only to a very small extent, although rich in the extreme, probably the richest in the world. One American settler, named Horner, who possesses I know not how many thousands of acres, is the chief cultivator of the soil; and he, indeed, is the king of the plains. Some time before the discovery of gold had been made in California, Horner had located himself here with but little means, but had purchased a number of acres from original Spanish settlers for a mere song. Immediately following the gold discovery the far-seeing American proceeded to buy more land, expending almost every cent he could muster in the acquisition of acres; and in this, at the prices the indolent Spaniards, unaware of the land's prospective value, were willing to take, he became the possessor of a large extent of country at a comparatively trifling outlay. The consequence of which is now that Horner is indeed king of the plains; and the extent of his operations may be inferred from the fact of his having put on the steamer to Union City (the one I had journeyed by), in part to accommodate passengers from San Francisco to San José, but chiefly whereby to send the immense quantities of vegetables, &c. which he raises to the Bay City.

I was informed by one of my fellow-passengers, an intelligent young fellow, who was one of a great number in Horner's employ, that the

Spanish settlers are now aware of the value of their land, rich as it is and contiguous by water to San Francisco; and that, although too indolent to cultivate the thousands of acres which they hold (beyond the requirement of their actual necessities), that now they will not sell only at the most exorbitant rates—too extravagant, indeed, for any one in his senses to give; and in consequence of this dog-in-the-manger spirit, the rich land is left in its unproductiveness, whilst these unworthy descendants from a race which produced a Cortez and a Columbus pass their hours in gambling, smoking, and sleeping, in quarters scarcely better than pigsties.

About twelve miles from Union City-which, wooden building as it is, I may here observe, was erected and so named by Horner, who intends that the place shall eventually be a city to all intents and purposes—we changed horses in sight of the Mission of San José, around which we observed numerous snug-looking buildings and cultivated patches of land. Here the country had changed in appearance, from miles of continuous flat land, destitute of timber, to gently undulating hills and green-sided valleys, here and there displaying knolls of trees; the latter, doubtless, planted by the old padres, the locality altogether affording full proof of the good judgment of those bygone worthy gentlemen in the selection of fitting places whereon to pitch their tents. From this Mission the town of San José is distant some ten or twelve miles, and with a relay of horses, we once more proceeded on our way. By the time we had accomplished the half of our journey, I found that the company remaining, who were going throughout, consisted of two Yankee cattle-dealers, an Irishman, who had joined for ever and aye the banner of the stars and stripes, and last, but not least, a dignitary of the Mormon Church-no less, indeed, than an Apostle. By the way, I omitted to state that the King of the Plains (Horner) belongs to the Church of this singular sect. I had sufficient conversation with the Apostle to discover that the qualifications of his high office did not certainly embrace much knowledge amongst them. He was, indeed, a very ignorant fellow, though sufficiently cunning to avoid converse with me on the subject of his Church and people, and which, finding he would not enter upon, I joined in conversation with the cattle-dealers, who were particularly free in expressing their opinions on any subject, no matter to them what. Amongst other matters, they were debating whether we should or should not take up the cudgels for Kossuth and his cause; and although differing on this head, marvellously well did they agree upon the certain consequence of such a step, should it be taken. If they did but once begin, why of course it would be all up but shooting in a jiffy; and as to John Bull, if he should not agree to the programme, and venture to put in an appearance in opposition, they'd lick him as he was never licked before; they had the ships and the men, and they'd soon blow him to h-l. It was, perhaps, somewhat indiscreet—away in the wilderness—but for the life of me I could not resist the inclination to remark that much as my sympathy was enlisted for the cause advocated by Kossuth, and much as I should regret any rupture between America and the old country, yet, in the event of such occurring, there would be anything but child's play going on; that I thought there was plenty of the old pluck left in England, whilst her resources were greater than ever. Who-hoop! did not this bring them out. They

commenced and continued together—the two Yankees, the Irish American driver, and all; the last, with more energy than elegance, declaring what amount of licking the Britishers were to get if they should dare to show their teeth. Well, we almost quarrelled on the subject, and yet withal I found that I did not lose aught in the estimation of my company by my speaking out, for as we neared San José-the discussion having long subsided-they were, one and all, ready to give me the benefit of their knowledge of the place, in reply to my inquiries respecting the best quarters, at the same time displaying not much reserve in intimating their desire to know what I was, and my mission to that part of the interior. It was pitch dark, when the waggon coming to a stop, I was told we were in the town, and before the door of one of the principal hotels—the "Mansion House." I had intimated my intention of stopping all night at this place of entertainment, and one of the cattledealers, it appeared, was also about to patronise the establishment, intimating to me that he had no luggage, but would hasten and engage a bedroom. I made no reply to this piece of information, which I had no interest in, but receiving my carpet-bag from the driver, followed after, and, advancing to the bar, told the functionary who there attended, I desired to have a bedroom.

"Yes, sir, it's all right; here's the book." And straightway he placed a huge-looking ledger before me, where, under date of the day, was

ranged a column of names, in various styles of caligraphy.

By my observations during the journey I had purposely mystified and excited the curiosity of my Yankee companions, and they now determined upon, at all events, learning my name, stood gaping over my shoulder as I hastily scribbled it down in the big book. It is the universal custom here, at the hotels, if you wish to have a bedroom, and they immediately poke a book at you for your name to be placed opposite your appointed number. Well, my next step was to see the apartment, and judge my surprise, to find in it two beds, and hanging over a chair near one of them a dirty looking plaid, which I at once recognised as part of the travelling paraphernalia of one of the cattle-dealers who had journeyed with me. In answer to my inquiry on the subject, Mr. Boots, who had conducted me to the room, coolly informed me that the other gentleman was to share the room with me.

"I'll be ——" I was about to express a very strong expletive, but substituted "whipped if he does," returning to the bar to demand an explanation, much wondering whether the patriotic dealer in beef or the people of the hotel had made the arrangement without taking me into

consultation on the subject.

"Oh! Mr. Hindquarter took the room for you and himself," in reply to my interrogatories, said the bar-keeper, and who, by the way, seemed to be on very intimate terms with Mr. Hindquarter, as I found them, on my return, in close confab, the cattle-dealer, however, withdrawing as I approached.

"Indeed!" I replied. "That gentleman is a perfect stranger to me,

and I shall prefer having a bedroom to myself."

"Oh! but we know him very well, sir; a very respectable gent, I

assure you, and worth 20,000 dollars any day."

Whether this piece of information about the dollars was communicated to me in the expectation that it would remove my objection to the

arrangement, I know not. I made no remark upon it, but desired to know whether they could give me a room to myself or not.

"Very sorry, sir, but we're very full, and it's the only room we have at liberty. I assure you, sir, Mr. Hindquarter is a very respectable man."

"Hang Mr. Hindquarter," I half-muttered, annoyed at having the patriotic butcher thus pertinaciously poked at me, and in anything but a heavenly frame of mind, invalid as I was, and the five-and-twenty miles jolting over the plains in a waggon without springs having rendered the likelihood of my having to forego a comfortable bed somewhat irritating—for I was determined on no account to share a bedroom with the man of blood. Late as it was, I was determined also upon seeing if there was not accommodation to be obtained elsewhere, and, after ordering supper, and swallowing a glass of something, which the bar-keeper called sherry, I sallied forth to look for other quarters to sleep in. The night was so dark that I could not see my hand before me, and, save one or two solitary lights in the distance, and the rays that gleamed forth from the opened doorway of the house in which I stood for a moment deliberating how to proceed, San José was steeped in inky night, and buried in a stillness most pro-The chances of success in my undertaking seemed, indeed, but small, yet forth I sallied. With some difficulty, and groping my way, I made for one of the solitary lights, which I found to proceed from an apothecary's shop, which, with its beggarly account of empty boxes and unpainted and undecorated state, might well have stood for Romeo's de-The presiding genius of the place was working away at a mortar, and a sickly-looking man, who sat watching the operation, was evidently that to the apothecary rara avis whose advent in the place with his prescription had been the cause of Mr. Pilocochee's not closing and retiring to rest in common with his brother-tradesmen in the place. The two men stared with all their eyes, as the saying is, when I inquired if they could direct me to the next best hotel, after the Mansion House, which San José possessed.

"Lee's is the next best," said the worthy drug-compounder, politely, and quitting his mortar he led the way into the street, pointing out the spot to me in the other light—the fellow-twinkle to his own, which I had at first seen, and only seen—at the same time intimating that the said light emanated from the lamp over the door of San José's second

best hotel.

Away again through the darkness I started, and found my way to the desired haven, in no very pleasant frame of mind, tired as I was, and with the prospect of having after all to sit up all night. But I was more fortunate, and my perseverance met with its due reward. Mine host of No. 2 hotel could give me a good bedroom: enough. I briefly told him of my visit to the rival house, and that I would have my carpet-bag at once transferred to his establishment.

"Our place is patronised by the first people here," said Boniface; "and we had the greater part of the members of the legislature when

they were here."

"A legislature in this place!" I half ejaculated, as I retraced my steps to No. 1 hotel; "at all events, the Solons could not have to run much risk of being overboard by too much comfort."

On telling the people at No. I that I had succeeded in obtaining a room elsewhere, they pretended to be much concerned that I should have had so much trouble; and doubtless inferring that the rival house had agreed to accommodate me, were pleased to say that they would make an effort to obtain a room; and, in short, a room was speedily declared ready for me. Well, I was in honour bound to return to No. 2, which I accordingly did, informing the proprietor of No. 1's having managed to find me the desired accommodation—that I should, therefore, not require the room which by this time was prepared for me—notwithstanding which I had come to pay for the same, as I had engaged it. This the worthy fellow would not agree to; he would take a cup with me, and be glad

to have me as a guest at some future time.

And thus, after taking a glass with No. 2, I returned to my quarters, took a light supper, and, thoroughly knocked up, retired to my bed which I had so hardly earned, and slept soundly till the sunbeams were pouring into the room next morning, and the house was all astir. Leaving my luggage until I should send the vehicle of the friend I was about to visit for it, after breakfast I started on foot for Santa Clara, some three miles distant, and the place where I purposed sojourning until my health should be completely restored. On reading over what I have written, it seems a great deal about a trifle; but again, it may be observed, that it shows what perseverance, under the most unpromising aspects, may achieve. And allow me to tell you, reader, that a good comfortable bed is not only very desirable, but a thing of need to any invalid who may have travelled some thirty miles in a springless waggon, over wild Californian plains,

and drawn by almost wild Californian horses.

San José is a highly interesting place, and well worthy of a visit. The modern houses are chiefly of wood, the older dwellings adobe, as is also the huge, sombre-looking edifice where rites called religion are still continued by the lights of tapers, though the great Deity's own glorious sun is beaming forth from the bright and cheerful sky. On the dark walls of this, what, I presume, must be termed sacred edifice, were sundry rude paintings of sacred emblems, rejoicing in bright yellow and vermilion. They looked not only ridiculous, but, to my eye, disgusting; the countenance of the Virgin Mary, whose figure occupied the central place amidst these tawdry daubings, without exaggeration, presenting the exact expression of the human face divine belonging to one who has had something more than a cup too much. The population of San José is mixed, consisting of Americans, Spaniards, Mexicans, and natives, the Spaniards and Mexicans predominating. Here, although the Sabbathday, I first saw the operation of moving a house on rollers, a proceeding which appeared to excite considerable interest, there being a large crowd gathered around watching the operation. I turned into the huge adobe temple, and a more gloomy interior devoted to the worship of Him who made the greensward, the flowers, the forest trees, and the pure blue sky, I never beheld. The numerous candles that were burning threw but a faint light over the vast space, and the black mud walls contrasted strangely with the gaudy dresses of the numerous devotees, chiefly Spanish and Mexican women, who crouched before the altar, apparently absorbed in their parrot-like devotions. Great God! that poor humanity should be taught to believe that adulation of Thee by such rule and rote is acceptable! Who is there that has ever given thought to this subject, and observed

the mode of worship in these so-called temples of God, and speaking the results of untrammelled judgment, but sees in it how much of the attributes of humanity have the founders invested the great Deity? They render Him little better than a God pleased with things which pleaseth poor humanity when elevated above its fellows. How glorious, how doubly beautiful seems the sunshine, the light from heaven, to one's eyes,

on emerging from these doubly places of darkness!

Around San José the country is extremely rich, amply repaying the labourer for his toil. The road to Santa Clara, some three miles distant, is remarkable in having a border on each side of magnificent trees, planted at regular intervals, their branches extending, in some parts, almost to meeting across the road, and this truly imposing avenue continues uninterrupted through the entire distance between San José and This work of the old Padres, at all events, entitles respect to their memories. Santa Clara, situated in the valley of the same name, consists of some five hundred tenements, chiefly occupied by Americans, and may be regarded as a rapidly rising place. The town is admirably planned, with fine wide streets; the houses, however, at present being scattered over an extent of ground, which gives the place more the appearance of mere outlines than aught else, but which, when built up, as is expected, will then be a very handsome town. Here also stands one of the old Spanish mission adobe temples, a counterpart of the one at San José. The valley of Santa Clara, from east to west, is about twenty miles wide, and consists of some of the richest soil in California. "A man need work no more than one hour a-day here to keep himself," was the remark made to me by a settler from Missouri. have sent for my family, for it is a splendid country." I found the same favourable opinion expressed by all with whom I came in contact, and I have heard from one who was competent to pronounce the declaration, that the climate of the valley was even superior to that of Italy. With my friend, who is an agriculturist, and an enthusiast in his admiration of the place, I passed a few delightful days. Although the country for some miles around Santa Clara is flat and destitute of timber, in half-anhour's ride you may reach the woods and the mountains to the north, where abound herds of wild cattle, elk, antelope, and grizzly bears. Geese and wild-ducks are seen in great numbers all over the valley, so that good sport will be afforded for a long time to come. On one of my excursions I saw the track of a Grizzly, and in Santa Clara met with several who had had encounters with them. In the course of a ride with my friend, when we scoured the country in search of a valuable young chestnut horse which had strayed from his ranch, and which he expected had joined a wild herd, we came upon some Indians ploughing, the implement used to turn up the earth being a part of the trunk of a tree, and though very slow, the work was anything but badly done. Amongst other ranches which we visited during our ride, was the vanguard of the white settlers advanced into the wilds, occupied by Captain Stephens. The house was situated in a most romantic spot, being perched on the side of a gently rising hill, covered with fine timber; by the side of the dwelling descended a stream of water, clear and bright, giving forth a pleasing murmur, whilst before the house was spread a vast green carpet, dotted, far as the eye could command, with trees quite park-like.

boned, and sinewy, his face almost covered with hair, and his voice rough and strong as the growl of a bear; his, however, was a rough crust covering a fine and bold heart. He was delighted to see us, made us heartily welcome to the best his ranch afforded, and whilst we partook of his hospitality, regaled us with a description of his last encounter with a Grizzly, in which he had come off but second best, having had to abandon his gun, saving himself only by flight and a rather perilous descent down a rocky steep. Stephens having killed more Grizzlies than any man in the country, his narrative was highly interesting to me, fresh as I was from listening to accounts in Santa Clara of his daring exploits and his success.

Another ranch which I visited, not so far in the interior, was occupied by an Englishman, who had been a great sportsman at home, run through his property, emigrated to California, and in this beautiful valley of Santa Clara, after a short sojourn at San Francisco, settled down to pursue business and pleasure together. The game to which he chiefly devoted his attention was elk and antelope, by which, sending to the Bay City for sale, he realised a very comfortable amount. He had his wife with him, a superior woman-superior inasmuch as, independent of being accomplished, she possessed the good sense to reconcile herself to the wilderness, and by her cheerfulness ever making sunshine in the house to greet the weary sportsman's return. Her only cause of disquietude was the danger of her husband being seized by a Grizzly; and as he frequently camped out all night, she had ample room for appre-It was but a few nights prior to our visit, as she informed us, that, hearing unusual sounds near the house, on opening the door, by the bright moonlight she saw two huge wolves standing within a few feet of the door.

In this fertile valley numerous claims of land have been made; and when the question of the rights of Spanish claimants to immense tracts shall be decided, the country is destined to swarm with busy humanity with thousands who are wending their way to seek new homes on the rich soils of the Pacific. A week's sojourn in Santa Clara thoroughly restored me to health, and I returned to San Francisco with so high an opinion of the valley, as to induce me to contemplate pitching my tent for the remainder of my life in that truly beautiful valley. I have been in San Francisco some five months, and can truly say that, taken altogether thus far, the climate is delightfully healthful. The rule here is cheerful sunshine and clear skies. The greatest drawback is the sometimes sudden transition from heat to cold; the early parts of the day in this month of April having been 90° in the shade, and at six o'clock in the evening of the same day, the thermometer close upon freezing-At times, too, the winds are almost terrific in their violence, raising clouds of dust from the planked, uncleansed streets, until the city at such a time, looked upon from an eminence, appears enveloped in a yellow fog.

In concluding this part of my Diary, I have to observe that there is too much excitement here for reading or writing, and the manner with which these notes are written will scarcely need an apology for the evident haste and apparent slovenliness, when the place and circumstances attendant upon their penning is remembered. And I may also here observe that the notes would not have been pencilled at all, had

it not been to redeem a promise made ere I left England.

ISABEL MILFORD.

AN OLD BACHELOR'S STORY.

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

II.

Poor Lady Milford! she had bowed to priestly rule with superstitious faith, and more and more exacting had it become. Her very conscience was no guide to her—it was not her own—it must be subservient to priestly interpretation. Her affections must not be consulted—for they were carnal, and must be subdued. Thus, then, how could her daughter hope to convince her of errors, which her Church taught her were virtues.

"Dearest mamma," said Isabel, shortly after hearing of her father's departure from England, "how pale and ill you look; how I wish I could comfort you."

"My child,, I am more happy than I deserve, and my health is not bad; but you have it in your power to comfort me, Isabel—to atone, in a measure, for the errors I have committed."

"How, my dearest mamma? you quite surprise me; you are not

surely in earnest." "I am quite so, Isabel. I feel that I sadly erred in early life, when I was young as you are now. I was thoughtless then, and the fatal consequences of uniting myself to a heretic never crossed my mind, at least I would not listen to wise counsel. I allowed my affections to sway my judgment, and though for years past I have striven to atone for my sin by every means suggested by my spiritual advisers-nay, child, you need not say what you were going, for it only adds fresh grief to my already lacerated heart, to think that she who has nestled in this bosom, and been nurtured and fondled from infancy with a fond untiring love, should now forsake the true faith, after all my earnest prayers for her, and anxious watchings against heretical doctrines-now, when arrived at years of discretion, and she ought to have learned to submit herself with a thankful spirit to the support and guidance of Holy Mother Church, she—oh, Isabel! how can I bear to utter it—is it not indeed a heavy judgment upon me for having loved you too fondly?"

"No, dearest mother! Rather believe it is an answer to your earnest prayers for me. You have prayed that your child might adhere to the 'true faith,' and is not Jesus the Rock of ages; is it not the true faith to 'believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?' Is He not the sole mediator between God and man. St. Paul says 'There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' (1 Tim. c. ii., v. 5.) Why, therefore, my dear mamma, does Rome teach us to seek other intercessors?"

"My dear Isabel, you are young, and I fear have been too little

checked and controlled in your early years, for you now to like to submit to others wiser, and better able to judge than yourself; you have ventured too boldly to seize upon the word of God yourself—I should have shuddered to have dared so far. Be sure, my dear, if you knew more, you would be less likely to set aside the wisdom of the Church, and rest upon your own erring judgment."

"But, dear mamma, I learn from the Bible that the Bereans were accounted 'noble,' in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things 'were so.'"

(Acts, c. xvii., v. 11.)

"But, doubtless, Isabel, it was their spiritual teachers who did so, or

the old and learned."

"But, my dear mamma, we cannot think so if we carry the sense of the whole chapter; it was Paul who preached, and the Bereans who searched the Scriptures daily; and 'therefore,' it goes on to say many of them believed, 'also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.' Now it is quite apparent, I think, you will confess that both men and women must have searched the Scriptures for themselves."

"Yes, Isabel, quite apparent to me that it was not young girls or

'boys,'" said her mother, sarcastically.

"But yet, mamma, our Saviour said, 'Out of the mouths of very

babes and sucklings have I perfected praise."

"But he did not say that 'babes and sucklings should search the Scriptures.' Believe me, my dear Isabel, you rest too satisfied with your own judgment. You know when we are considered 'discreet' we are permitted to read the Scriptures, but our spiritual mother provides 'milk for the babes' as 'strong drink for the elder of her children.'"

"But indeed, mamma, I cannot believe that the Scriptures should be withheld from even children. Our blessed Saviour, when only twelve years of age, read the Scriptures—we are told expounded them to the multitude—plainly showing that in the Jewish dispensation children were not forbidden to read them; for in all things our Saviour made himself a pattern for us."

"He was subject unto his parents, Isabel," said her mother, in a re-

proachful tone-"are you?"

"Indeed, dear mother, I would be, in all that interferes not with my duty to God. But the Scriptures have opened such a world of light to my hitherto poor darkened eyes and saddened heart that I rejoice to find I may disobey you—even you, my own precious mother, when you tell me to close that holy volume; for why is it that our priests would 'teach for doctrines the commandments of men' (Matt. c. xv., v. 9)—'making the word of God of none effect by their tradition.' Is it not so with them?—do they not exalt tradition above Scripture? Indeed they do. And when I read the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians, I quite shudder to observe the resemblance the Pope bears to 'that man of sin,' 'the son of perdition.' Dearest mamma, how fearful the words!"

"Hush!-Isabel, I will hear no more; it breaks my heart to listen to

such words from your lips. Alas! I fear it is retribution to me, as Father Donald says, for having married a heretic, and for the love I still bear him. Oh, Isabel, my child! you little know the tortures I endure: while I bear a calm exterior, the inward suffering is intense. I have loved your father with the fondest, truest love—ah! too much I have loved him. Father Donald says so."

"Impossible, my dearest mamma! you could not love your husband too much. It is cruel and heartless of a priest to say so. And papa loves you as fondly as man can, I do believe; why are you thus divided

after years of happy union?"

"I have of late years felt more uneasiness at being united to one of a different faith, but your father was easily won over in many things, though in some others he continued almost obstinately to oppose me. Often I was warned and counselled against loving him too much, and yielding too much to his opinions. My duty to my spiritual mother at length stood directly opposed to this mortal affection—then came the trial. I rejoice that, even at the sacrifice of all earthly happiness, I was enabled to follow the path of duty."

Lady Milford looked so pale and woe-stricken, and uttered the last words in such tones of deep affliction, that Isabel was greatly overcome. She threw her arms around her mother's neck, and entreated her to be

reconciled to her father.

"Mother, dearest," exclaimed she, "true religion will never bid you lacerate your own heart by tearing from it the most sacred ties; it will sanctify your love, but never bid you cease to love. Forgive me, my mother, if I say too much, but surely you cannot be blind to the many inconsistencies in Father Donald's profession and practice. Does he never say anything repulsive to the delicate ear? Is there never any degree of hypocrisy distinguishable in his manner—in fact, his very face. Oh! how I despise him—and yet I pity him, truly and sincerely pity him, for surely he must deceive himself, or he would never strive to deceive others as he does—and you, dearest mamma. Oh! how he has deceived you with regard to Lord C——"

"My dear Isabel, I have hitherto refrained from speaking of your

engagement to Lord C-, but-"

"Pardon me, mamma, for interrupting you. But what do you-what

can you mean by my engagement to Lord C---?"

"My dear child, you surely do not so far rebel against me as to reject my power to make an engagement for you? You know that I love you

dearly, Isabel, and will do everything for your welfare."

"I believe that you wish to do all for my welfare; but, mamma, have you not just told me how you have sacrificed your own love to your belief in what you considered duty? and will you not also sacrifice me to the same superstition? Oh, forgive me, but indeed—indeed it must be superstition, or something akin to it, which makes you allow Father Donald such influence over you."

Her mother turned from her with an air of offended dignity. Isabel caressed her, and prayed for forgiveness if she had said more than filial

duty permitted, and at length her mother was appeased.

"I wish to hear no more on this painful subject at present, Isabel;

how it will all end Heaven only knows! I see but sorrow and anguish for us all in perspective; but you may avoid a great deal yourself, and relieve me of a great burden of apprehension, by marrying Lord C---. Do not, then, my darling child, refuse, if you really love me as you profess.

"Dearest, dearest mamma; oh, do not urge me to take such a step.

Indeed—indeed, it is impossible!"

"I cannot see why it is impossible. If you really felt a childlike affection for me, you would rejoice in the prospect of having your mother constantly with you. Lord C--- has entreated me to make his home mine-that wherever you are I may be with you. I should accompany you to Rome, where he proposes removing after marriage."

"And have you gone so far as to arrange this without asking my consent?" said Isabel, colouring, with a little indignation.

"I have not positively consented, for, alas! I no longer feel that my darling child consults my wishes, and submits herself so entirely to them as formerly," said Lady Milford, sighing, and speaking in a tone of reproach.

"But, dear mamma, how could you wish me to marry such a-I feel

so inclined to say hypocrite?"

"You do well to check that sinful inclination. Father Donald is prepared to prove his lordship's zeal and piety—the voluntary penances he

performs are quite surprising. He fasts twice a week, and-

"Oh, do not tell me anything that Father Donald says; it has quite the effect of making me believe him in league with Lord C--- in all his evil practices. I am assured by Mr. De Grey that Lord C-- is a bad man. Such expressive words, from one who seldom speaks of his neighbours, and would not, I am persuaded, assert an unfounded fact, is sufficient to convince me that Lord C -- is everything detestable, and that I am right in believing him insincere in his religious professions."

"Mr. De Grey is a very officious and designing old man," said Lady Milford; and continued to abuse the poor old bachelor in a way which

he really did not deserve, considering his admiration of her.

Isabel had mentioned Mr. De Grey as her authority for Lord Cevil character; it was quickly made known to Father Donald, and by the kind priest as quickly to his lordship. But could his lordship deny it? No; but his blood boiled to hear that a "heretic" had presumed to find him out.

"Revenge is sweet," he was heard to mutter as he left the good

The priest again sought Lady Milford, and assured her that it was useless wasting arguments with such an obstinate disposition as her daughter's. He said,

"Your ladyship has indulged her from childhood in every whim and

caprice."

"Pardon me, father, I have endeavoured to train her carefully and judiciously, but mortals do err. I may have been too indulgent, yet her disposition seemed too gentle to need severe measures."

"I often warned you, daughter, that Miss Isabel was headstrong."

"She never seemed so to me until lately, father."

"Her will was never opposed until now. She has been allowed to go where she pleased—and where do you suppose she has been?—where has the little traitress been, but to heretical meetings in Exeter Hall! Yes, I have found her out at last. When on a visit to Lady I——, in London, she attended lectures there, and thus, ignorant as she was, she has been misled and deceived. If you, daughter, had used your authority, and obliged her to attend the confessional regularly, I might have stopped this, but now it is too late. Nothing can be done now but to oblige her to marry a true Catholic; such a one now offers. Lord C—— will make an admirable husband. He will be judiciously strict, and yet most kind and condescending."

"She will not hear of the union; I cannot prevail-"

"You must consequently insist."

"Oh, father, I love the dear child too dearly to see her pine away and die, and I dread such a consummation of any act of severe

authority."

"Daughter, you are too faint-hearted; she must be frightened a little; her nature is timid, though self-willed. I will undertake to frighten her in a little harmless way; it will be mere child's play," continued he, with a sarcastic smile, "mere child's play, but we must be child-like with children."

"But how, father, how will you frighten her? Meantime, you

frighten me-in fact, I tremble already.

"I would propose that you give her to understand you are going to see some old friends in ——shire; there is one of those religious seminaries just established there, where the spiritual and temporal interests of the sisterhood are so well ensured that the superior seldom fails in bringing the erring to a sense of duty. I know the holy mother well, and will be there to meet you."

"But how can I impose upon her so? She will not believe that I

have friends she has never heard of."

"Well, you shall receive a letter from an old friend residing theretrust to me for that," said he, with a curl of the lip, "only be prepared

to accept the kind invitation."

Lady Milford looked uneasy, and sighed, but the priest took no notice. His eyes looked so keen, and his countenance wore so indescribably disagreeable an expression, that Lady Milford shrunk from him with disgust and alarm.

"Indeed, I cannot consent to such a scheme," said she, hurriedly.
The priest scowled upon her, leaned forward and whispered low in her ear. She trembled, sighed again, then, with downcast eyes, said,

"Can nothing else be done to reclaim her—to bring her back to the true faith? Must she marry Lord C——? Why not let her remain

single?"

"It must not be. She has plighted herself to the young heretic whom I cautioned you against; thus, daughter, you see another proof of your injudicious conduct. Your only course now is to follow the counsel of your Church." So saying, he left her.

Many private consultations took place on this subject, some of which were overheard by the faithful Abigail of the lovely Isabel, and treasured

by her as delicious mystery; but in a few days her fears for her young lady were aroused; and on finding Lady Milford and her daughter set out for ——shire without her, she forthwith sought him whom she knew to

be her young lady's most sincere friend-even the old bachelor!

"I am quite sure, sir, they are going to make her marry Lord C——. He has often offered me money, but I'd never take a sous!" said she, bridling. "And oh! sir, I can't bear to think that them two fond hearts should be divided! Mr. Montague, sir, and Miss Isabel, sir, I mean. Oh! sir, I know my young lady couldn't be happy with that wicked Lord C——"—here she crossed herself devoutly—"though he is a Catholic, I can't endure him, sir, begging your pardon, sir. I heard him say to Father Donald one day, sir,—la! I'm half-frightened to tell, but the priest is gone, and I shall forget it before his next confessional—I heard him say with a horrid oath that he would be revenged on her after she was his wife! Oh, sir, ain't it horrid to think of; and what is to be done, sir, for I know he's gone to ——shire to meet my lady?"

"Why have you not let your young lady know that mischief was

plotting against her?"

"I couldn't be sure till to-day, sir. I overheard Father Donald say to my lady, in an angry tone, in answer to something my lady said in a whisper, 'Trust that to me, daughter, I'll take care they are married;' and I made bold to follow my young lady down stairs, for she was just gone down to the carriage, which was waiting at the door, and I managed to pass close beside her, and look very wise-like as I said, quite in a low voice, ' Beware!' She must have understood me, for she looked frightened, and was going to speak, when Father Donald stepped up, frowning at me, and she sprang into the carriage in a minute, yet she looked out of the window at me, and I saw her turn red, and then quite white in a minute; I curtised to her, and the carriage drove off. Father Donald tapped me on the shoulder, saying, in a very impertinent way, I assure you, sir, and in a way I won't put up with, sir, from no one-no, indeed, sir-he tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Hussey, what are you doing here, eh?' I didn't deign to answer him, sir, I assure you—the impertinent man!"

The old bachelor tried to soothe her offended dignity, and dismissed her with a promise to do his utmost to prevent the final separation of what

she so pathetically termed "two fond hearts."

THE TWO CHRISTMAS EVES.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

I.

"My dear Miss Wentworth," said Lady Strathbane, one morning, to the young governess, who rose from the breakfast-table to resume her duties in the school-room, "I have been waiting for you to make the proposition to me; but you are so timid and retiring that I suspect you have some scruples even to solicit so natural a privilege; I therefore anticipate your wishes, and propose that you go home next week to spend the approaching Christmas in the bosom of your family. You must, indeed, quite long to see such near and dear relatives after so considerable an absence; while, on their part, the anxiety must be equally and tenderly impatient."

"Must I go, madam?"

"Certainly not, unless you particularly desire it. But I thought that nothing could have afforded you more pleasure than spending the vacation as I suggested. Surely you would like so to do?"

"I have never for one instant indulged in so hopeless an idea."

"How singular. But be seated, Lucy, for you appear exceedingly agitated and unwell. Although from delicacy I have hitherto made no attempt to extort a confidence which you abstained from voluntarily proffering to the mother of the children whose education you superintend, yet believe me I do covet the satisfaction of being admitted to a close intimacy with the early, and evidently painful, events of your life, than you are willing to allow to the Countess of Strathbane, on whose bounty or caprice you fancy you depend for support and patronage. Speak freely then, my dear; trust me as far as I can be of use or consolation to you; and rely on my ardent sympathy, my prompt assistance."

"Madam, I have nothing to impart, nothing to desire. How, indeed, could I have a wish ungratified, furnished as I am, by your ladyship's munificence, with the means of more indulgence than I have either taste

or spirits to enjoy?"

"Lucy, I did not allude to aught so derogatory to your nature-so debasing to your sentiments, as the gratifications which money can pro-To the common run of minds, I grant, that the certainty of abundant food and raiment—obtained without excess of labour—joined to the shelter of an affluent and luxurious home, suffices fully and amply But, with the sensitive and the refined, it is for all their requirements. totally otherwise; the gentle look, the conciliatory word, the benevolent smile, are as absolutely essential to constitute happiness, nay, even contentment, as the air they inhale—as the delicate viands which nourish the frame's vitality—as the garments which protect it from the keen pinchings of the sweeping blasts of winter,-the scorching of the blistering rays of summer. The heart has its cravings as well as the stomachthe young heart especially-which wealth cannot satisfy, nor luxury appease. It must have affection—it must have commiseration—it must have reciprocity, to fill the void, which else aches unto death with the sickening sense of its own vast and intense emptiness."

"Oh, madam, how true!-how true!"

"Too true, I apprehend, for you, my poor girl. Too certainly have I divined the dread vacuum of your own heart, Lucy. I have never as you know, once expressed the astonishment which I have, however, yet most strongly felt, that, during the whole nine months in which you have been an inmate under this roof, you have neither received, nor, so far as I can learn, written one single letter to a human being. Such isolation is terrible to contemplate !- such forlornness harrowing to think of ! You cannot be utterly alone in the world? In some remote corner of this wide universe you must have at least one friend whose memory is dear to you-to whom your welfare is precious? Do not sob so, pray, pray try and compose your feelings; pray, pray recollect that, at all rates, you have a friend, a sincere friend, in me.'

"Friend! Lady Strathbane - you my friend?"

"Well! I admit that the term does merit your surprise, reproachful as it undoubtedly is; but, Lucy, hear me atone for that which creates your just amazement-your almost indignation. I confess, that up to this moment, I have been culpably insensible to the claims which you really have on my consideration-my esteem-my gratitude, in fact; for, charmed and delighted as I am with the progress which my darling children hourly make in every amiable and endearing virtue, in every elegant and shining accomplishment, I forgot the pure source from whence they derived instruction—from whence they learnt that the ways of wisdom lead to paths of pleasantness and peace. I forgot that which a mother should ever remember, my dear, that, in the mental guide of her offspring, she has her equal, if not her superior in mind, if not in outward position; and, consequently, her aim should invariably be to demonstrate by her own deferential conduct towards her, that she is an object worthy of their affection, respect, and reverence. But, alas! the services are too frequently appreciated, while the bestower of them is suffered to remain in contumelious disregard and indifference. Nor is this neglect alone evinced from mortal to mortal; too often-too often can a beneficent Providence charge us with the same unthankfulness! As I feel it no humiliation, Miss Wentworth, to apologise for past omissions, so do you feel none to pardon them."

"Madam—what can I say? I am overcome by this unexpected kindness; it is so long, so very, very long since such expressions have fallen

on my ear—on my heart."
"And why? Why is it that you should be such a stranger to tenderness; you, so capable of awakening it, Lucy? Tell me, then, tell me, without disguise, why you are so desolate? tell me why you stand, like a blasted tree, stripped of all natural affections? tell me the cause of this excessive grief-these agonising tears-the chill shudderings of the hand I hold—the wild heavings of the bosom beating against mine? I am a mother, speak to me as one. You can have no personal occasion for reserve, for you have more than fulfilled the assurances of the good Mr. Spencer, at whose recommendation I engaged you; high as the encomiums were which he unsparingly lavished on you. What, then, can be the mystery which you are so studious to conceal? What, then, can make you hesitate to repay by your present candour my past great forbearance? Have a care, Lucy, your longer silence may be injurious

to you; for suspicion may at length glide into the mind which now regards you as faultless; as the serpent did into paradise—to raise dis-

trust and anguish."

"Oh madam! never, I implore you, do me the mortal wrong of changing your favourable opinion! Willingly, most willingly would I this instant dissipate, and for ever, the cloud of suspicion now arising in your bosom; willingly, most willingly would I testify my exalted sense of your ladyship's unmerited condescension by a full and unreserved disclosure of my previous life; but that portion of it which is not a complete blank, is fraught with such horror that I am positive I do not trespass too severely on your clemency when I entreat to be spared the recital of it, until I have more fortitude to lift the veil from so dark a picture. Believe me, madam, when I swear in the face of Almighty God, that no one circumstance in my own short but sad career could cast the faintest shadow of blame on my character, or dim the spotless lustre of the integrity of my soul; I am but the victim of the transgression of others—those transgressions which are yet so heavily visited upon the hapless and the innocent. Do not, then—oh! do not, then, from fear or prejudice, remove me from your angelic children. Suffer me to remain accredited and unquestioned suffer me still to enjoy the proud distinction of being the guide, the companion, the friend of the immaculate young creatures, whose love for me is a thought of inexpressible delight, whose cultivation is an object of the purest piety, whose interest is the sole animating influence of my worn and weary heart, and whose contempt would bow me so low to the earth that I never could elevate my brow again to my fellow; even although scorned alike, sorrowing alike, falsely condemned alike! Suffer this, madam, and death, rather than dishonour, shall reward your matchless reliance."

Lady Strathbane could not, after this earnest and pathetic appeal to her forbearance, pursue the subject further. But although, in obedience to Lucy's entreaties, she restrained her curiosity, she felt her interest only the more deeply excited for the almost child, thrown, as it were, by Providence on her humanity. . She regarded her with a tenderness of compassion nearly amounting to affection; and Lucy was peculiarly calculated to inspire such emotions in the essentially gentle and feminine bosom of one so truly womanly as her protrectress. Shy and unobtrusive to an extreme, yet, with a winning eagerness of manner whenever convinced that her humble services were required, she was always on the alert when opportunity needed, so that all embarrassment about employing her was destroyed. Young, pretty, and apparently friendless, with a mind highly cultivated, and in possession of a fund of useful and valuable information, a temper and disposition pensive to melancholy, with a firm and quiet piety, she was looked upon by the whole household of Lord Strathbane as an object of superior esteem and pity, and by her sweet pupils as one of artless love and honourable imitation.

Lady Strathbane had received no other reference with the new governess, save the letter above alluded to from the Reverend Mr. Spencer, whose amiable wife had, when reverses came upon her mother (an old friend and schoolfellow), adopted Lucy, and educated her with her own numerous family, with the ultimate view of her going out into the world,

as she had done.

П.

WHEN Lucy admitted to Lady Strathbane that where the history of her life was not a blank it was a fearful reality, filled up with dismal and startling horrors, she spoke but the barest truth; for, from her very earliest recollection, a dread, defineless shadow of evil had hung like a heavy curtain over the portentous destiny of her house. Her mother, a pale, spiritless woman, gaunt to frightful attenuation, flitted about mournfully and noiselessly, as a spectre; her father, moody and morose, was either silent and sombre, as the impersonation of selfish and absolute discontent, or stimulated by intemperance to that awful degree of frenzy and riot that his unsociability was prayed for, as a blessing, a mercy, both by her poor terrified mother and herself. But it was of her brother-her beautiful, wild, indomitable brother-of whom she had the most appalling remembrances. Even now, years after, she still shuddered at his excesses of passion; the terror he occasioned, the ruin he Even now she wept in memory with the forlorn, heartbroken mother, whose sole aim was to soothe the tempests of his soul, to speak peace to his stormy bosom, to calm down the rage of his heart, to kiss away the tears of impotent indignation from his fierce, luminous eyes, and to ransack her distracted mind to please and amuse him. Not a word of unkindness—not a look of upbraiding was ever allowed to annoy or aggravate the imperious boy, who so remorselessly plunged them into misery and despair.

Lucy, at first, rebelled against this seemingly unjust restriction—why should she yield to such partial fondness, such weak infatuation? But when her mother begged her, with overflowing tears, to submit to it for her sake—when she embraced her gratefully for her dear obedience, her angelic compliance with the wayward caprice of the little domestic tyrant—when, in fact, she protested that every opposition offered to him entered like a two-edged sword into her own most inward being—how could she choose, but blindly and implicitly follow the dictates of that wretched, sorrowing mother? How could she refuse to purchase her even temporary tranquillity at sacrifices much more serious than the subduing of her own feelings, the crushing down of her own sensibility, the envious repinings of her own jealousy, for the waste of love on one who prized it not, while her yearning heart fainted for the smallest particle of it? She therefore braced herself, as a martyr, to the cause, and spontaneously, and unregardedly, gave up her every thought to that

dear, though cruelly absorbed mother!

And if ever a human creature merited these more than ordinary efforts of self-denial, it was the unfortunate parent for whom they were made.

Mrs. Wentworth, when still a mere girl, had married the first object who awakened the romance of her warm but guileless heart; the first man who struck the harmonious chord of sentiment to thrill responsive to the tone of tenderness and trust. But she had married without the consent of her father—nay, against his express commands, and even with the denunciations of a fearful future ringing in her ears; for insanity lurked in the mind of her intended husband, and the anxious father, with the eye of that prescient affection which the care of an only and motherless daughter rendered but the more clear and observant, foresaw the inevitable

misery, if not crime, which such an union entails, if not on the reckless and inconsiderate mother, most certainly on her children, should Provi-

dence so far visit her disobedience as to grant her any.
"Lucy!" exclaimed the old man, falling on his knees before his weeping but obstinate child. "Lucy! although you are brighter to my eyes than the light of Heaven's most unclouded sun—sweeter to this heart than the most fragrant flowers of earth—dearer to this bosom than even the memory of my own too early blighted love, yet dark and desolate as it would make the more than midnight of my weary and woeful age, I would rather lay you in the churchyard beside the mouldering ashes of your mother, and watch the sward grow green over you in the coming spring, than give you to him, whose embrace would be worse than death -whose bosom, sered and parched by the consuming fire of madness, would not have one vernal spot for the repose of that poor throbbing head, one genial thought for the rest of that fatigued and harassed spirit. Lucy, my child! my infatuated child! listen to me, oh, listen to me, if not for my sake for your own, for so sure as you wed that man, so sure will sorrow and tribulation come upon you; so sure will anguish and despair overwhelm you. You do not know, you cannot conceive the poisoned fruits which the seeds of latent insanity will produce for you and yours; and when too late, if you reject these prayers, if you despise these tears, you will remember my warning; when too late, you will wish, in the bitterness of a sterile contrition, that you had attended to it, that you had heeded it, when too late; you will smite upon your breast and cry, 'Father! would that I had obeyed you! for lo, I now feel responsible to my God for the errors of my children; and truly that idea is more than I have courage to endure.' Save her from this, O Lord!"

Lucy Murray, melted to the most remorseful agony by this trying scene, kissed the white head which had fallen exhausted on her lap, watered it with a flood of impassioned tears, blessed it with a torrent of incoherent words-but for all that she married. And shortly after which rash event her father died. But he was an old man, and it was natural that an old man should die; so, with that consoling reflection, she made a compromise with conscience, and, consequently, was not utterly wretched

at his loss.

But wretchedness, great, unmitigated, incalculable, life-destroying wretchedness, was before her; and soon, too soon, she overtook it in her

dark and dreary path.

The occasional irregularities of the lover, the indecorous eccentricities which he committed, were charitably, or thoughtlessly, ascribed to unbounded health-exuberant spirits, which the mild persuasiveness of the young wife's lips, or the more powerful appeal of her tearful eyes, would most certainly check, would most assuredly cure; but, alas! in the husband they only became more deeply rooted, more loathsomely disgusting.

Totally given up to intemperance, and that slothfulness and inattention to personal neatness which constantly accompany such a demoralising propensity, every vestige of manly beauty shortly disappeared, every delicate consideration for her feelings vanished. He cared not whether his wife was pleased or displeased, happy or miserable, so that she spared him her reproaches, so that he could have his boon companions, his wine,

his song, his odious orgie of degrading and destructive excess.

There was no cheerful fireside for her, no intercommunion of thought, no mutual hopes, no mutual anxieties, no weekly labours, no Sabbath rests; he, absorbed in brutalising gratifications, sought for no pleasure out of the pale of such indulgence; while she, not knowing what evil the present day might bring forth, never ventured one anticipation beyond it.

Her children were born without a paternal welcome, and grew up without a paternal admonition. Her sole study being to conceal, as much as possible, the dreadful example which their father presented to their first

youth.

Her little girl, blighted almost from infancy by a preying melancholy, while her boy, her more robust, more animated, more intensely ardent boy, yet too precociously evinced those alarming symptoms of malady, hereafter to wring her maternal bosom with a torture not to be described, were to her but fruitful sources of vigilant watchfulness and unslumbering

anxiety.

At the age of ten, the frail, drooping Lucy was called upon to exert unwonted energy in assisting her mother to nurse her father, in evidently his last earthly attack of illness; and wonderfully and gloriously did her mental strength triumph over corporeal infirmity. Night and day she shared the patient vigils, the matin exertions of her worn-down, but still uncomplaining mother; anticipating, with her, his every want—soothing, with her, his every pain—praying, with her, for pardon, for his every sin—forgiving, with her, his every injury—not even flinching from his strong grasp, although inwardly shuddering to feel the sharp gripe of his closing fingers round her arm, as with frightful gesticulation he described the appalling horrors of an imagination when under the domineering influence of delirium tremens.

Oh! it was pitiable to see the still muscular man clinging to that pale thin child, to protect him from demons grinning around his bed, or frowning threateningly in the remoter corners of the room, then, with the most hideous contortions, ferociously uncoil snake after snake from his shrinking limbs, dash them on the floor, and call upon her to set her foot on

them and trample them to the smallest atoms.

Often and often was she on the point of rushing to her equally horrified mother, and, by crushing her face into her bosom, endeavour to shut violently out a sight which must, indeed, be witnessed to be at all comprehended. But, when she beheld that trembling mother's own face, concealed in the bed-curtain, and just caught her stifled sobs issuing from it, she felt her fears give place to renewed fortitude. She felt that there was no cause for alarm, although much for grief and anguish, at the poor maniac's too apparent and real sufferings, while striving to enlist her sympathy for them, and with unparalleled heroism she failed not to the last. But the impression then made was for ever afterwards ineffaceable. How could she, indeed, forget such a death-bed? How could she, indeed, banish the picture of the cursing, imprecating, blasphemous lunatic with shaven head, with arms confined, expiring without one glance of recognition, without one spark of returning reason granted him to say, "Lord, have mercy on my soul!"

III.

It was on the Christmas-eve, six years after her father's death, that Lucy, loaded with appropriate presents from the considerate Mrs. Spencer, took her departure for the metropolis, with a gay heart and glad countenance, to spend a month, a whole month, with her mother.

They had not met but once before, since their separation, for travelling was expensive, and besides, tended to dissipate the mind, leading it away from the study so important for their future more frequent intercourse. They both satisfying themselves with a constant interchange of letters; breathing of deep anxiety and patient endurance, on the one hand, and hope and happiness on the other; for youth will be sanguine, despite

of the schoolings of disappointment.

At length, however, as a reward for her extraordinary assiduity and exemplary perseverance, she was to have a holiday, a real holiday, for such it must prove, after so tedious and trying an absence. It was late when the coach arrived from Dorsetshire, it having been delayed some hours on the road by a heavy fall of snow, which impeded its progress considerably; and the man whom she afterwards engaged to drive her to her mother's humble abode had so much difficulty in finding the remote and intricate locality of "Rolls'-buildings," situate between Holborn and the Strand, that the time which he took so to do appeared interminable to the ardent and energetic girl, who panted to embrace the dear, precious mother, whom she was on the point of so unexpectedly surprising by her visit—no intimation having been given of her coming, lest Mrs. Wentworth should make efforts beyond her means to receive one, who, for some years, had been enjoying every comfort; for what was good enough for that mother generally would more than suffice her.

The clock of a neighbouring church was actually striking twelve when she reached the narrow passage so long sought in vain; and she feared that she should have to disturb her mother's rest, and almost repented the meditated surprise; but her apprehensions were instantly relieved by perceiving a light gleaming through the shutters of the small parlour window; and, on the door being opened with a promptitude which amazed her, Lucy sprang from the carriage, and flinging herself on her mother's bosom, she exclaimed, in a voice tremulous from emotion, "Oh, mamma! dear, dear mamma! how fortunate I am to find you still up! But, let me dismiss the coach, for I long to look well on that

darling face again!"

"Lucy, is it indeed you? I thought it was your brother, who had, perhaps, been brought home; my heart beats yet at the sound of the wheels, for we so seldom have a coach here! But, make haste, and come in, for you have not been used to the cold night air of late."

There was something much colder than the bitterest blast of winter in the frigid reception of her mother, which struck chillingly on poor Lucy's expanding heart, and sent a faint shiver through her whole frame; for it convinced her, as of old, that her brother, still, still her brother, reigned paramount in the affections of the mother, whom she had almost flown to see.

On entering the little confined apartment, that repelling sensation was yet more increased; for she discovered, at a glance, that squalor and VOL. XXIII.

misery surrounded her mother, and that that mother was too familiar with it to imagine, for a moment, how it would revolt her daughter, or even be apparent to her; she, therefore, without one fond remark on the wonderous improvement in Lucy's appearance and manners, apathetically stirred the expiring fire, stuck a fresh candle in the glowing socket of the battered tin candlestick; and then, without even wiping her hands, went to a cupboard and brought out some bread and cheese, which, without even the apology for a plate, she placed on the bare table, observing, "You must be hungry after your journey, Lucy; so help yourself, my dear."

Lucy hungry! Lucy able to eat under such circumstances! under such a woeful disappointment of her brilliant anticipations! oh, no, she felt full even to suffocation! She thought that she had come for a month, and,

with an involuntary shudder, she declined the offer.

"Ah, well! it will be ready for Stanley when he does come home."

"Is it my brother's profession which detains him-?"

"His profession? he has no profession—never would have a profession. It is pleasure, Lucy, pleasure of the most corrupting, the most debasing kind which keeps him out thus, hour after hour, night after night. For as the boy was such is the man—violent, wayward, demoniacal. Oh, Lucy! you cannot judge of your mother's sufferings!"

"But how, dear mamma, is he supported in that pleasure?"

"How! by these hands! Look at them, Lucy, look at me, and read of incessant toil, of ceaseless labour in the hard lines written on my wretched frame! Your mother takes in washing, your mother goes out charing, your mother begs—nay, almost steals, Lucy, to minister to the profligacy which she can neither check nor restrain, which she can but

pity and deplore !"

Lucy was not selfish, Lucy was not resentful, and when she raised her tearful eyes in obedience to that mother's objuration, and fixed them with a gaze of the most painful scrutiny on the wan and haggard face before her, when she contemplated the bowed and wasted form, still clad in the faded suit of early widowhood, all the transient feeling of jealous anger so lately predominant fled, and rising with irrepressible and holy affection, she threw her arms round her mother's neck, and sobbed out,

"Oh, my mother! you have endured all this! slaved like this! sorrowed and suffered like this! while I knew not of your wearing agony, your silent despair—never, never dreamed of it! Oh, my mother! forgive me for indulging in those luxuries which a divine instinct should have taught was unfilial and barbarous, unshared by you! But, mother, I hope—I am certain, a time will come when I shall be able to repair all the past for you!"

"Never! my dear child—never! my kind Lucy: the future, as the past, must be the same for me; for it is banned by disobedience, it is darkened by the denunciations of a broken-hearted father, who, prophetic in death, pronounced the irrevocable doom of your mother's tortures to the grave. But hark! hark! surely I hear approaching footsteps! it must be Stanley, at last!"

The mother's practised ear did not deceive her; the frail door was suddenly burst open, and, with bare head, his coat torn to shreds, his brow livid, his cheeks and lips colourless, and his hand, which yet clenched a large sharp-pointed knife, covered with blood, Stanley Wentworth stood

before his aghast mother and sister.

Without uttering a word of explanation, he hastily closed the door, and, as if the more effectually to bar out pursuers, placed his back against it,

and then cried frantically,

"Put out the light, mother! put out the light! extinguish every spark of fire! Why are you still up? get to bed. Say, swear, if they come, that I have not been from home. Here, mother, here, hide the knife; bury it, mother, bury it, but not in the ash-grate—they always search that—down the well, down the well in the yard, but mind it don't, ring against the sides in going down, or the neighbours may hear!" and he flung the bloody horror resolutely towards that recoiling mother; who, however, with the instinctive eagerness of maternal preservation, snatched it up, and, wrapping it in an old rag to deaden the sound, hurried away to save her son by concealing the evidence of his guilt.

"Ah! Lucy, is that you," he continued; "I did not observe you; come out of that corner, don't be afraid of me, but bring me some water directly; I must wash off this blood! Do I look particularly pale? do I look like a criminal? It was done in an instant of the most maddening irritation, of the most infuriating jealousy! Lucy, I plunged that knife up to the haft into the girl's bosom who had deceived me, even while encircled in the arms of the villanous friend who had seduced her affections; and I only drew it forth for his, but he escaped—the coward escaped, and will, no doubt, denounce me as a murderer; but I shall elude justice—I shall, for I am mad—quite, quite mad. I inherit insanity from my father; and, mother, mother," he added, to the poor creature, who had re-entered the room, "you must bear me out in that; for you know that my father was mad when you married him; you know that your own father died cursing you with the consequences of uniting yourself to a lunatic!"

With the rapidity of fear, frenzy, and that desire of self-justification, so strong even in the perverted mind of the really insane, was all this spoken, when, exhausted by his own superhuman volubility, Stanley

sank on the floor in a state of complete insensibility.

Then the mother, who had been totally stupified by this terrific scene, and more particularly by the last dread words of her ill-fated boy, roused to the most acute sympathy and alarm, shook off the benumbing torpor of her own annihilating self-upbraiding to shield and succour the son, now more than ever dear, now more than ever dependent; for now danger, and perhaps death, threatened to rob her of him. Lifting him from the ground, she bore him in her arms to the little couch, which he usually occupied when at home, in the corner of the room; then calling on Lucy impatiently to assist her, she washed away every trace of blood from his person and dress, cutting off deliberately the wristband of his shirt, which she thrust into the fire, and with her fingers raked the still hot embers over it, feeling only relieved when it was entirely consumed; then, kneeling by the side of Stanley's bed, she kissed his blanched and guilty brow, his lips, his hands, strained him to her bosom, called on him to revive, and blessed him-blessed him with the fervour which a mother but evinces who thinks that the child of her heart may be snatched from her without pausing to consider how deservedly he merits punish-

And Lucy-she could but look on in silent and appalled amazement-

almost recoiling from the mother, who so eagerly endeavoured to conceal crime—who so passionately hastened to forgive it. At the moment, she seemed nearly as guilty in her estimation, and she shuddered, while re-

flecting, that she was her mother.

At length Stanley unclosed his eyes; he gazed on that mother's face bending over him with angelic benignity; he felt that she was the same, would ever be the same; that she will protect him; that she was his sole earthly defender; she, a poor, feeble, poverty-stricken widow-woman; but she was strong in love, rich in love; and, falling on her neck, he burst into tears, and sobbed in unrestrained and artless anguish; submitting to all, obeying all, passive in all; he, so ferocious in the vindictiveness of murder so shortly since, is now as meek, as powerless, as when, in the innocence of very childhood, he was folded to that adoring breast; while she, remembering her father's dying words, mentally exclaimed to that Father who alone could avert their direr portent, "O Lord! if it be Thy will, let this cup pass from me!"

"Spare my son, O God! spare this, my only son, for repentance—spare him, for sanity!" She turned to that son, and found him in a calm and quiet sleep; with a holy care she laid his head on the pillow, and then, with Lucy, sat down by the bedside to watch and to listen—to listen, with suspended breath and throbbing hearts, to the gradually increasing indications of re-animated day—apprehensive of every sound, and expecting, in every approaching step, to behold the stern and implacable delegates of justice rush in to seize the blood-stained assassin over whom they were weeping—for whom they were praying—while he still

slept on, without fear, and without remorse.

After a time, however, finding that they were unmolested, at least for the present, and which was, indeed, a signal reprieve to them; brief, alas! as it might yet prove! they, therefore, ventured to move, at first, with the most extreme caution, and then, with more courage, till, emboldened by apparent safety, Mrs. Wentworth noiselessly unbarred the shutters, and furtively looked out on the thick chilling fog of a midwinter's early dawn; and then, with more resolution, scanned the wretched, dirty court, to see if any strangers were lurking suspiciously about; but, except a few ragged children, the accustomed denizens of the place, she saw no one. Immeasurably reassured by this scrutiny, she began, mechanically, to arrange the humble apartment as usual, ready for Stanley's waking.

Poor Lucy, besides the actual turpitude just revealed to horrify and appal, had also to struggle with another most serious and painful embar-rassment, and one which, under ordinary circumstances, would never have struck the mind so antagonistically; and that was the exquisite neatness and value of her really tasteful costume; for Mrs. Spencer had taken a delight in sending her home with every advantage of dress which she could afford to bestow on her protegée, to heighten her now considerable natural beauty, that the pride and pleasure of the mother might be the more intense. But, as it was, it only displayed a poignant contrast, and Lucy would have given worlds for a tattered shawl or cloak to fling over her, so as to conform, in some degree, to the want and misery into which she had so suddenly and so awfully been involved.

CHANGE.

BY MARGARET CASSON.

CHAPTER III.

Her lot is on you—silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suff'ring's hour,
And sumless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds—a wasted shower!
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship—therefore pray!

THERE is a deep moral to be learned from most things which we meet with in this world, if we would but take the trouble to seek for it, even in the commonest tale we read, only it is one of the misfortunes of True, almost every the present day, that most people will not think. one now has an opinion of his or her own, but often and often are these said opinions nothing but notions chosen at random from two sides of a question, not from any innate conviction of which is the right and which the wrong preponderating in the mind, the decision being made after each side has been laid steadily at the very root of truth; ah! no; in these times of listless ease and entertaining days, many are glad to be spared the exertion of doing this themselves, and involuntarily allow others to do so for them. Imperceptibly do they take their ideas from the conversation, the volume, or the paper they have last been hearing or reading, and as the food for the mind for babes is rather an olla podrida in its nature, the general class obtain a strange unsorted mass of divers kind of thought, and fondly think, in a pleasing self-deception, they are very decided people! but as for originality of idea, or any distinct individuality of mind, that is rarely to be met with. of a distinct bent of character amongst mankind, would make the world very different to what in its present state it is. It would then give man a confidence in himself; he would feel his power as a man, and act ac-How rarely do you meet with self-dependence in those around you. You may see many who make a great show in the flesh, but how few, when they come to be tried, can stand alone! how few will "trust to the heart, and to what the world calls illusion," to the only way of acting through life to make the end of that life a happy one to yourself and those around you; to act up to your own sense of right, and to go on fearlessly, protected by your own consciousness of the purity of motive which actuates the line of conduct followed, and to rest satisfied in so doing, careless of false judgments passed by men, leaving the event to God.

But instead of this, in the present unnatural state in which we live, when all seem cast in the same mould, and the aim and tendency of each is the strong desire to copy one another; when the great object of society appears to me to be to deaden all display of feeling; when it is reckoned a sin committed, when moving mid its shallow worldly crowds, to break through its selfish surface tranquillity by betraying warmth of heart, or a pure impulsive nature: when enthusiasm is looked on as a madness; (that noble word! so exalted in its very meaning,—the

God within us, to be treated thus!) when human nature becomes but an artificial automaton, with no higher object than living, as ninety-nine in a hundred of the world now do, by eating, drinking, and sleeping, calculating and weighing only, is it wonderful that the powers of the incorporeal essence repose too? and that the world prefers a listless round of pleasure and enervating enjoyment to following out the aim and object of existence; to "labour on, while yet the light of day sheds abroad its pure and blessed ray; for the night cometh?" and yet there is no real satisfaction to be found elsewhere but there, to me, which is not vanity. I speak not of manual labour, but of the cultivation of the mind, the Promethean heaven light to chrism the earth clay, to invest it with immortality, and raise it from corruption! but "L'homme est de

glace aux vérités, il est de feu pour les mensonges."

After all this long exordium, you will expect some magnificent subject presented to your view, and I fear you will be sadly disappointed. I am only going to discourse to you about, to introduce you to a great favourite of mine; but to no heroine; a simple, innocent young girl, yet a model, to my mind, to show us "what a woman true may be," of what a noble, generous-hearted woman might feel and be, and I think should feel and be. But I was saying, when I began my chapter-and I cannot think how it was that, mounting my hippogriff, I took a course so devious to reach my original intention, though, once give the reins to thought, and you can never know where it may lead you; it has certainly led me through strangely tangled forests and brakes, and most out-of-the-way bypaths, from the busy marts of men, yet has it brought me at length, even like the wandering prince in the history of "The White Cat" (and everybody knows the story of that lovely, enchanted specimen of the feline race), to the entrance of Fairy Land at last, and that was the place from whence I originally meant to start. To return to my argument, and I ask, is there not a deep moral to be learned from most things, even from fairy tales? In the "Three Wishes," for instance—those gifts and blessings so ungratefully thrown away, so wickedly wasted on the black pudding, of blessed memory! No wonder, in disgust with such materiality, the fairy offerer flew away home, far away from such monsters of iniquity, and never came again. I always wish it had been my fate to be one of the heroes or heroines, as the case may be, in a fairy tale, just to give the charming little beings a better notion of the human race; they always would choose the worst specimens amongst us with whom to deal; though to be sure, even now, when we have our fate placed in our own hands, and it falls to the lot of almost every man, once at all events in his lifetime, to have the choice of his future destiny set before him, we cleave to the evil and reject the good; true, it is generally in early life when the occasion presents itself, and we act in haste, and repent at leisure all the rest of our days upon earth. Yet, even later we often heedlessly choose "the pudding" for our first wish—something of little value to set our hearts upon, and then fix it on our dearest, for the second, and make them suffer for our sins; and for the third! get out of it in despair, as best we may; wish it off again-do anything to lay the storm which we have raised, and find an end; and something I suppose of the same sort is this, the end of my CHANGE. 51

sermon, and a very tame one, too, I fear! But still, if the days of fairy land and fairy blessings existed in the present day, and one of the amiable specimens of that now, alas! extinct race were to appear before me, and to offer to me these wishes once given and thrown away in so unromantic a manner, for number one, I would choose a home after my own heart, and of all places that should be the one which gives me the idea of comfort most, a rustic cottage, a maisonette ornée, a regular case of rural felicity, not such a one as that where "the earwigs dropped into the tea, and the frogs sat up in the rushlights," vide Mrs. Nickleby (I quote from memory), but such a home as was that where my beloved Ida dwelt, and where I will show her to you first; such a peaceful, happy

abode, the Eden of the earth, if ever one may yet be found.

It was situated in a secluded spot, in one of the loveliest of our English counties, amid such gorgeous scenery, such varied majestic features in the landscape—a land of hill and dale, of wild mountain and cultivated valley—a retired place, suggestive of happy days and holy thoughts, of calm, sweet hours. It stood some distance from the road, at the foot of a sloping, sunny bank, a gentle green declivity; before it lay the little garden, Ida's chiefest care, so bright and beautiful with fragrant flowers; with the rustic paling and glossy laurel hedge, separating it apart from the public way; the murmuring waters of a little brook flowing through this Paradise the only sound, and its babbling voice fell soothing and tender on the ear; crossed by a rustic bridge it led you through the garden to many a pleasant walk beyond. And silvery was the sparkle of its tide that living summer's day, heavy was the perfume wafted through the morning air from mignionette, and stock, and many a fragrant blossom growing there; for it was such a real brilliant summer's day, so warm and beautiful to view; a day when all nature spoke but only joy, the very trees basking in the twilight seemed moveless in the ether's blue; not a cloud was in the sky, the very grass seemed as if it breathed; instinct with life to exist and to rejoice beneath the sunlight. And Ida, my Ida, is standing by the window gazing upon the lovely scene, her fair brow as tranquil, her dark grey eye as clear to look upon as the world outspread before her. There was a harmony flung around Ida Stanley, which made her ever dear to gaze on, the "sunshine of the soul" was there, and gave that charm; for Ida was not beautiful, she was very quiet, very calm in general, perhaps it was that repose which wove the spell over all she might do or say; you might pass her when unknown, a hundred times unnoticed midst a crowd, but if once her expressive face was heeded it must ever after please; yet was there nothing remarkable to view in her, she was very different to her cousin Eleanorfor Ida is Eleanor's cousin and Henry Stanley's daughter-and yet at times the sweet face bore a strange resemblance to that lovely one-a resemblance more felt than really there; but they two were very different in heart and mind, there could never be any great similitude between them, even in outward feature. Her eyes were her greatest beauty, and they were such glorious, soul-like orbs, veiled in their long, dark eyelashes, no one could with such eyes be plain, they were so star-like and so calm, with an angel holiness and a genius light.

Ida's days as yet had passed very evenly along, her only sorrow, her

mother's failing health, and when the heart has been untouched by grief, youth is very sanguine then, and she never felt much dread. fondly did she watch over the suffering form, but she never felt afraid. Of life she had seen but the bright side and none of the bitter, and, in those days, of forebodings and terror for the future she knew but little; she hardly felt her own powers of intellect as yet-circumstances had never called her energetic varied character into being. At times she felt almost startled by the might and strength of her own deep thoughts, but they sunk to rest again, and quietly she saw them pass away; but of late there had been a more passionate depth in the maiden's eye, an impress of another's life upon the brow. The child had become a woman now, and Ida's thoughts lingered no more on childish things; there had arisen an awakening of another love, the young heart was leaving the tranquil shore to embark amid the many upon the stormy sea of life, to learn its dangers and its perils, its doubts and its fears, to risk its all upon its venture now-and with what prospect? To win the opposite shore, and be at peace? or to float on peacefully at first, fanned by a fair breeze and encouraged by a prosperous sea, and then at the very moment when the heart is bearing up most cheerfully, when sanguine success, delusive promises to crown the fondest hopes, when fear is lulled to rest, when listlessly dreaming with hands idly playing in the waves as the boat sweeps on, in an impalpable world of bliss, then, in the midst of careless ease, to founder suddenly on a rock, to wake to the full reality of its position, to find the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow; with the injured ship to strive to right itself, and meet the storm as best it may, relentlessly to find its doom to be, either to float on in the forlornity of a dead calm, after the first dread blow, a dreary lengthening time, to fail at last, or worse, to be shivered utterly to wreck and ruin on the quicksands and shoals it suddenly encounters, to struggle vainly with the warring waves and opposing tides in order to reach the haven where it would, oh, so gladly be; but only to find all efforts worse than vain, and to sink back spiritless and exhausted before the unpitying destiny, to be drifted worn and lonely to the point from whence such a short time before the little bark started forth, in all the pride and glow of youth, the untamed energy of untried experience—say!-

As yet the mystic secret is unveiled, Ida is very happy now. She stands there in a dreamy, visionary ideal world, gazing admiringly on the lovely panorama outspread before her; but it passes before her as a pleasant vision, her thoughts are not fixed on that scene then, they seem far away, and yet is she evidently watching and expecting some one to come that way; and near her, inhaling the balmy air, luxuriating in the summer glow, looking so frail and shadow-like there, reclining on the couch she can so rarely quit now, with her eyes intently fixed upon her darling child, rests Ida's mother. They two are watching for the post, an anxious time as all may know in these days of rapid intercommunication, even

when nothing particular is expected to arrive.

"How very late it is to-day, Ida; will it never come?" asked the mother, anxiously; and Ida, starting from her reverie, looked wistfully from the window, still no sign, and she resumed her watch.

"I wish it would come, mamma; the suspense tries you so; you look

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so pale, now, and this morning I thought you appeared so much stronger, it was quite pleasant to view," continued she, affectionately, as she bent down and kissed her mother's forehead.

"Did you? I feel nothing very brilliant either, Ida."

"Do you expect a letter from my father, mamma? surely another

mail is not due yet."

"No, dear, I cannot hear so soon again. Oh, Ida, there is the postman. Surely it is him, is it not, Ida?" exclaimed Mrs. Stanley, eagerly, as her daughter continued silent.

"No, mamma," answered she, at length, slowly; "'tis only Mr. An-

nesley."

"Only Mr. Annesley, Ida!" said her mother, archly.

"No, mamma, only Mr. Annesley," answered Ida, more decidedly; and here are the letters, too, at last, mamma," cried she, scarcely heeding Dugald's entrance, in her eagerness to seize the welcome documents. "Only one for you, mamma, and what a huge affair, in a most wondrous schoolboy-looking hand, a curious specimen of uglygraphy, and a whole stick of stealing-wax expended on the seal. Why, mamma, it's our own coat of arms!"

"Ida, my child, give it to me," gasped the mother, nervously; and, anxiously scanning the address, the pale, thin hand trembled quiveringly as she took it from her daughter's hold. "Thank God, it has come at

last," and a deep feeling of relief flitted over the fair wan face.

If the flowers that strewed the path of Alice Cunliffe in her early youth had been but poisoned blossoms in that of her rejected lover, no need for Richard Stanley's envy now. If bright sunny hours had once been hers, the melancholy days had come unto her; even he might afford her pardon now, for the life of the once beloved and beautiful Alice was fast fading from the joys of earth. For many years her existence had been a happy one, few had been the evil days of her pilgrimage here below; but she was not sorrowless now. Round her dying bed hovered many a cloud of sadness; her husband was far away, he she so lovingly adored the weary waste of waters parted from her, and she knew they could not hope to meet again in this world. He was in India with his regiment, and she had left him in the vain hope of re-establishing her failing health in the air of her own native land. A deceitful hope had buoyed her up at first, but there was no hope now; she knew that she was dying, and her only fear was for Ida, she "the sole daughter of her house and heart." And the thoughts of what was to become of her was an aching, ceaseless pang to Mrs. Stanley's peace. There was no chance of the father's return for a year, and to leave her child alone and unprotected it must not be, yet where to turn for earthly succour, and the thought of Richard Stanley rose before her mind, but she hesitated then; there had been such complete estrangement for so long, and then, besides, the remembrance of the past relation she had borne to him-how could it be? yet nothing else appeared, and Alice hesitated no more. A mother's dying prayer; even his heart could not close over that petition, frozen and worldly as it had become; and then Dugald Annesley had said so much in praise of Eleanor, and that thought had weight again. Eleanor would love and comfort Ida, and Ida was one who pined for love and sympathy.

To ove those around her, and to meet with love in return was as necessary to Ida's happiness as sunlight to the flowers. Perhaps one of her greatest faults (or misfortunes I will say, it can scarcely be called a fault) was her over acute susceptibility to the influence of external circumstances, a source of much disquietude to Ida as well as of exquisite pleasure, perhaps causing the former to predominate over the latter, and the mother felt how unfitted were her own friends to constitute a happy home for her daughter's peculiar oscillating temperament. So she hesitated no more. It needed a struggle to write it, a sacrifice of prejudice; but Alice liked to look on things as they are, and in that light to view them. She saw no other course before her; and if Richard Stanley would extend his protection to her child she could die at peace then. So Mrs. Stanley wrote unknown to Ida; she had waited long and patiently for the reply; it had come at length.

"How kind of you, Mr. Annesley, to bring me all this beautiful fruit;

these lovely flowers, they quite eclipse Ida's little blossoms."

"I am so glad you like them," said Dugald, looking so gratified at her visible joy; "my father brought them from Mr. Bayley's place, where he has been staying, and I begged some from him, for I thought they might please you."

"Don't abuse my flowers, mamma," interrupted Ida, "they are very tidy in their way, and you know you like them much the best in your

heart."

And the young girl looked so charming and so child-like pure, as she bent over the basket which contained them, and examined the fragrant exotics, and he was watching her all the time, so pleased and so admiringly, and seemed so domesticated there; I wonder how Eleanor would have liked it could she then have seen him? He and Ida were certainly very great friends.

The clasp of Mrs. Stanley's hand meanwhile tightened round her letter; she was so longing to be left alone to read it silently—she felt so nervously anxious to know the contents, and yet so ready for any excuse to delay the breaking of its large ostentatious looking seal; for if disappointment should result! what bitterness of heart it would be to her.

She could bear the suspense no more.

"You are talking of your garden, Ida," said she, at length; "will you not take Mr. Annesley to see its beauties, and compare the flowers with

his own hot-house plants?"

Ida stared; for considering Dugald was at the cottage on an average four days out of five in the week, she thought he must know the beauties of her garden pretty well. But as she always did as she was told, she obeyed without comment, and led the way, with Dugald following her.

And a pretty sight it was to see her showing off her little flower-garden, flitting from blossom to blossom, and expatiating on the beauty of her favourites, as she prattled so artlessly, moving lightly along—so unpretending, yet so charming—and mingled with it all such a beautiful hesitation: an occasional pause in the freedom of her discourse, as some word or look from him would strike tremulous and uncertain the chord hidden far below in the depths of Ida's heart; and then again as speedily

dismissing the thought, and stilling the musical sound she scarcely understood, she would continue in her joyous, light-hearted tone, to wander from theme to theme as happy as a bird in spring. And Dugald, listening so interestedly all the time, and seeming as content as Ida; any stranger passing by would say that there "each heart had found the goal it sought;" and the inference would not have been surprising. I am certain now, Eleanor would not have increased her happiness by the That happy boy and girl! At length, as they were returning towards the house, Ida, who had been for some little time silent, remarked abruptly and apropos to nothing, "I fear I was very unmindful of you this morning when you arrived, but I was so anxious to get mamma's letters."

"Nay, it was my fault, intruding at so early an hour."

"You intrude! impossible! Come when you will, you are ever welcome."

"Oh! thank you so much," said he, looking so gratefully upon her; "I was so anxious to bring my offering to Mrs. Stanley myself."

"It was so kind of you."

"I will not be praised without deserving it; I did not come for that alone, I came to seek for sympathy, for I have had a grievous disappointment to endure, in the shape of a letter, telling me my uncle was going abroad, so that I cannot go to Morley this summer as I hoped to do."

"Oh, I am so sorry for you, but then you will stay here?" asked Ida joyously, her looks contradicting her sorrow expressed for him.

"I suppose so," said he, sighing, "but it is a sad disappointment; do

you not pity me?"

Ida stopped, and picked a rose.

"I cannot," said she, half shyly, bending over its opening petals.
"How very unkind," said he, laughing, "when I toiled through the heat on purpose to find some consolation, and now you will not give it to me."

The poor little caged heart beat fast; foolish child, to imagine that was love, and not to know it was her own hands which were making the idol, and imbuing it with a light it possessed not for her, throwing herself in blind devotion before its chariot-wheels to be crushed and meet a cruel death! And she thought that he loved her!

"Are you very anxious to go to Morley?" was all she said.

"Yes.

" Why?"

"Oh! I don't know," replied he, colouring. "I have spent all my life there; I have never been so long at home before since I was quite a little boy, and-and I am very fond of my uncle."

"How very charming! Well, I suppose you must content yourself

with staying here; we will do what we can to comfort you."

"You are very good. There would be an inducement in that, certainly; but I shall not be here for long, in about a fortnight's time I am going away."

Ida looked very blank indeed.

"I join my uncle abroad," pursued he; "then I remain with him

travelling about until October, when I must return to the delights of Alma Mater."

Ida vigorously pulled her rose to pieces.

"I don't see exactly what you mean," said she. "You must be a wondrous instance of a devoted nephew; quite unheard of in love for an uncle, if being away from him one fortnight can cause even all this grief. And you are really going?"

"I?—Going? Yes, I am really going," said Dugald, looking very silly at the nonsense he had spoken. "Did you say just now your

mother had heard from Mr. Stanley, to-day?"

"I said I thought it must be from him, and marvelled accordingly."

"And you never saw your cousin, Eleanor?"

Ida threw the stalk of her rose, which was all that remained, in the brook they were then passing. She had picked it for him, would she could as easily have drowned the remembrance of the love she bore him; but many waters, alas! cannot quench love, neither the floods drown it, and it could not be.

"No," then said Ida, looking yet wonderingly in his face. He was very absent, very unlike himself to-day; he knew quite well she had never seen Eleanor, yet the truth never struck her, poor silly bird. "She is very beautiful, is she not?"

"Oh, lovely-most lovely," was the earnest reply. "I wish you knew

her."

"I wish indeed I did."

"I wonder if that letter was from Morley Court. Excuse my rude-

ness, but Mr. Stanley is a great friend of mine."

"Really," remarked Ida, coldly, "I thought you did not like him before. Perhaps it is him you love so much—wish so much to see, not Dr. Markham? You seem in a most Christian and brotherly frame of mind for every one, to-day!"

Dugald laughed at his own folly, and changed the subject; and they talked on. A silly conversation this to tell, but it is such like silly conversations people often talk; and small things often betray volumes of truths to, and of, those who speak them—surface words they are, but

telling truly of what is lurking deep beneath.

Mrs. Stanley had followed them as they left her with her eyes, and heaved a heavy sigh. She was so fond of Dugald Annesley; and oh! how earnestly she wished that he might marry Ida. But she knew how futile are such wishes, and having no talent for match-making, she turned to her letter at last. And Alice read her letter. It was short. and strangely characteristic of the writer. Letter-writing was not Mr. Stanley's fort, and, as Ida had termed it, it was a most remarkable specimen of uglygraphy. "Dear sister," it began. Alice little dreamt what trouble had those two words cost Mr. Stanley to write-that slight remembrance of a vanished hour, that little vein of romance, which unknown dwells a drop in every heart, however stolid and unromantic it may be, rebelled strongly against the word. "Dear Alice" had seemed worse, it was obliterated, and the other term supplied. The letter ran thus: "Dear sister, I received your communication some time past; absence from home and a pressure of business made it quite impossible

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for me to write to you before. As you may well believe my time is never my own, the numerous avocations attendant on my position render that out of the question. I do not wish to keep you in suspense any longer for my reply; and as to-day I have an engagement with Lord Arlingford and his son, I have requested my daughter Eleanor to write to you on the subject of your letter. I am sorry to learn you feel so nervous about your health, but I hope your fears make you persuade yourself you are worse than you really are—as ladies often do. But Court of Morley is quite at your disposal, if you think the change would do

you good. Believe me to remain, &c., &c."

And this was the man who had offered her his hand, had prayed for her love, had knelt in misery at her feet. Alice marvelled, and well she might. Yet to do Richard Stanley justice, he never believed she was so really ill. He knew she used to be a timid girl, and fancied she was still one who would tremble at the slightest ailing now. He thought (I do not know, by the way, whether telling such thoughts is doing Mr. Stanley justice or no) that Alice was anxious he should know her child; it would be such an advantage to her could she be introduced into the circles in which he moved, and, as he was fond of patronising, he really did not mind if he could be of some use to Henry's daughter; -and with this letter Alice must rest content. She felt sadly crushed and bewildered. And all this time the unconscious Ida was wending on in a state of ecstatic bliss, with Dugald by her side, through that lovely garden, unwitting that so near another heart was suffering such agony, dear as Alice was to both of them-"so runs the round of life from hour to hour;"-and with a sigh Alice opened the enclosure from Eleanor. But, oh! how different the gushing outpourings of that young warm heart to the cold, calculating important words of the quondam lover of her youth. How sweet the promises of sympathy and love offered for her child to the mother's aching heart. The cares, the fears of the dying one were more than rested then. The earnest prayers she might be spared to them, the ardent wish to know and love her, the solemn promise that if she was taken from them that all Eleanor could do for the orphan cousin bequeathed to her should be done, the gentle apologies for her father's chilling lines, the assurance that he felt far more than he expressed, the woman's heart which dictated the letter,—it was as the fountain in the desert to the worn traveller—to that weary one; and her eyes were yet dwelling gratefully and fondly on the words when Ida and Dugald returned to her, and the envelope of Eleanor's letter had fallen at Mrs. Stanley's feet.

"Have you had a pleasant walk?"

"Do you know that writing, Mr. Annesley?" asked Mrs. Stanley. "Yes, very well; it is Eleanor Stanley's," said he, colouring.

"Yes, what a good hand she writes."

[&]quot;My darling mother, yes;" and Ida went to kiss her, and Dugald stooped to take the envelope up. He knew in one moment the writing, and he felt spell-bound with delight to see something she had touched—something her hands had held. He stood there quite unconscious of remark, gazing fixedly upon it; and Ida talking to her mother, telling her of his plans, and laughing heartily at his devotion to his uncle; and Dugald considering the little prized bit of paper.

"Oh, all she does is good," said he, rapturously.

Mrs. Stanley pondered, and sighed, and fixed her eyes on Ida, but she stood quite untroubled there, and the mother believed her heart-whole; and Dugald, unseen, appropriated his envelope, and went away, feeling very guilty at having done so, as if anybody else but himself could value that small morsel of paper. And how he looked at it, and cherished it, and carried it about with him, never destroying it, but worshipping it more than ever Catholic prized saint-like relic. Speak, ye who have done likewise, who have known the bliss when, parted from the being you love, and passing days far away from the presence of the loved one, with no intelligence to break the silence of the separation, no light to glimmer through the darkness, when suddenly a little star has shone through the thick, murky cloud which covered you, some faint streak of light in your horizon has arisen, some little memory-token to soothe the long-severed heart been brought before you, have you not done the same? Has not your heart in its wild idolatry sanctified the flower, the paper, it may be even the careless mentioning of the one beloved name by the lip of another, but, oh! that little light, has it not illumined your dark path for many a day to come? Then how was it that Dugald and Ida were so much more than common friends? His own home was near Mrs. Stanley's cottage. She and her mother had come there during his absence at Morley. On his return he had made their acquaintance, and liked them well; had gone there constantly; at first pour se distraire un peu, afterwards because it was such a pleasant friendship; and thus it had been, and they were certainly very great friends indeed. And now he was going to leave her—the pleasant days spent together to end, the intercourse to cease. Ida felt strangely agitated at the thought of parting. But the time came, and when it was over, and he was gone, she determined to forget him, but,

Pour chasser de sa souvenance,
L'ami secret,
On se donne tant de souffrance
Pour peu d'effet.
En songeant qu'il faut qu'on oublie,
On s'en souvient.

Alas! poor Ida!

VELTHINAS; OR, THE ORDEAL OF SACRIFICE.

A BIOGRAPHY.

The Tomb.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"How are my beloved poor?" asked Count Aula; "I must first

inquire after them."

"They have wanted nothing, my dear lord, since you departed. Those who survive, will be ready to bless you; those who have left us for a better lot, remembered you in their dying hour."

" La Carità, is she alive?"

"No; she died soon after your departure, and left enough money to have her remains conveyed to her brother's grave at Bibbona."
"Then you have no ill news?—How are your own family?"

"All well, all are married and happy. My good wife is still my companion, and we have twice as many grandchildren as we once had chil-

But he sighed at one passing recollection of grief.

"Sigh not, my worthy Anselmo, you have been a Christian all your I, who have not, do not sigh. I bear the memory of all without a murmur; I give thanks, indeed, to Heaven."

"Ah, my lord, I have not your mind, yet I never complain: that sigh

was the deepest I have uttered for many years."

"Your heart, my Anselmo, was never hard; mine has been, but my convictions are not the less strong. The cross once engraved on a hard heart becomes the more indelible; it is as if cut into a blood-stone."

"Do you never sorrow over the past; never revert to all you have lost on earth?"

"Only on the first occurrence of new trial. I have learned that it is an injustice to the Saviour to bear our own cross. He is the sole divinity of sorrow; the crucifix is still his throne. But let us quit sad subjects on this occasion. Tell me, has the design which Ippolito undertook to complete for me prospered. You know to what I allude."

" My lord, it is finished."

Saying which, Anselmo presented the Count of Aula with two keys, which he drew from his breast, one of polished steel, the other of golden

The count paced the room for several moments, shading his eyes with his hand.

"Have I done wrong? is it false pride, vain glory, the materials for fresh penitence? No, it is not for my own, it is for the Christian glory; it is a temple! My motive in dedicating it has been no other than gratitude, my purpose than to praise the Giver of Intelligence."

"Thank you, my good Anselmo; farewell, we shall meet often."

Anselmo went his way, and the count bent his steps towards the village church. Near the sacred fabric lay the churchyard, the garden of It was silent, like the night in which the living sleep, though sunshine covered it. As at mid-day the tired peasant, with his cheek

"Oh, all she does is good," said he, rapturously.

Mrs. Stanley pondered, and sighed, and fixed her eyes on Ida, but she stood quite untroubled there, and the mother believed her heart-whole; and Dugald, unseen, appropriated his envelope, and went away, feeling very guilty at having done so, as if anybody else but himself could value that small morsel of paper. And how he looked at it, and cherished it, and carried it about with him, never destroying it, but worshipping it more than ever Catholic prized saint-like relic. Speak, ye who have done likewise, who have known the bliss when, parted from the being you love, and passing days far away from the presence of the loved one, with no intelligence to break the silence of the separation, no light to glimmer through the darkness, when suddenly a little star has shone through the thick, murky cloud which covered you, some faint streak of light in your horizon has arisen, some little memory-token to soothe the long-severed heart been brought before you, have you not done the same? Has not your heart in its wild idolatry sanctified the flower, the paper, it may be even the careless mentioning of the one beloved name by the lip of another, but, oh! that little light, has it not illumined your dark path for many a day to come? Then how was it that Dugald and Ida were so much more than common friends? His own home was near Mrs. Stanley's cottage. She and her mother had come there during his absence at Morley. On his return he had made their acquaintance, and liked them well; had gone there constantly; at first pour se distraire un peu, afterwards because it was such a pleasant friendship; and thus it had been, and they were certainly very great friends indeed. And now he was going to leave her-the pleasant days spent together to end, the intercourse to cease. Ida felt strangely agitated at the thought of parting. But the time came, and when it was over, and he was gone, she determined to forget him, but,

Pour chasser de sa souvenance,
L'ami secret,
On se donne tant de souffrance
Pour peu d'effet.
En songeant qu'il faut qu'on oublie,
On s'en souvient.

Alas! poor Ida!

VELTHINAS; OR, THE ORDEAL OF SACRIFICE.

A BIOGRAPHY.

The Tomb.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"How are my beloved poor?" asked Count Aula; "I must first

inquire after them."

"They have wanted nothing, my dear lord, since you departed. Those who survive, will be ready to bless you; those who have left us for a better lot, remembered you in their dying hour."

" La Carità, is she alive?"

"No; she died soon after your departure, and left enough money to have her remains conveyed to her brother's grave at Bibbona.

"Then you have no ill news?-How are your own family?"

"All well, all are married and happy. My good wife is still my companion, and we have twice as many grandchildren as we once had chil-

But he sighed at one passing recollection of grief.

"Sigh not, my worthy Anselmo, you have been a Christian all your I, who have not, do not sigh. I bear the memory of all without a murmur; I give thanks, indeed, to Heaven."

"Ah, my lord, I have not your mind, yet I never complain: that sigh

was the deepest I have uttered for many years."
"Your heart, my Anselmo, was never hard; mine has been, but my convictions are not the less strong. The cross once engraved on a hard heart becomes the more indelible; it is as if cut into a blood-stone."

"Do you never sorrow over the past; never revert to all you have lost

on earth?"

"Only on the first occurrence of new trial. I have learned that it is an injustice to the Saviour to bear our own cross. He is the sole divinity of sorrow; the crucifix is still his throne. But let us quit sad subjects on this occasion. Tell me, has the design which Ippolito undertook to complete for me prospered. You know to what I allude."

" My lord, it is finished."

Saying which, Anselmo presented the Count of Aula with two keys, which he drew from his breast, one of polished steel, the other of golden

The count paced the room for several moments, shading his eyes with his hand.

"Have I done wrong? is it false pride, vain glory, the materials for fresh penitence? No, it is not for my own, it is for the Christian glory; it is a temple! My motive in dedicating it has been no other than gratitude, my purpose than to praise the Giver of Intelligence."

"Thank you, my good Anselmo; farewell, we shall meet often."

Anselmo went his way, and the count bent his steps towards the village church. Near the sacred fabric lay the churchyard, the garden of It was silent, like the night in which the living sleep, though death. sunshine covered it. As at mid-day the tired peasant, with his cheek resting on his hand and his eyelids closed, slumbers under the beech, so slept many there; slept on magically, not a breath, not a dream, not a moving limb. Though the dust accumulates and covers all, is green, and is shaded by cypress, that place is no longer a field as it once was, nor the peasants' napping-place. There is no more daily work gone through there; men lie not there often to snooze. Those who plant there do it reverently; those who reap, cull but some sacred memory. Those who walk there tread lightly, and trespass not; for the Lord of that deep manor is the Almighty.

And there walked the count of Aula, his head bowed low. He stood still for a few moments before a grave which was fenced in, and formed a little garden, the resting-place of his wife and children. He opened a small gate with a key, knelt on the sward, and affectingly embraced the crosses. In a whisper he then pronounced the names of his family, uttered a prayer, and retired; his face beaming in the sunshine, as if every ray were a hope.

He was again on his way to the castle; entering it, he exclaimed:

" My faith has triumphed!"

On the following morning a carriage entered the gates of the castle, and shortly was announced the Cardinal Prince Abarbanel, the Bishop of A person somewhat past the middle-age, with a countenance unspeakably mild, and eyes overflowing with affection, entered, and falling at the feet of Aula, embraced him.

"Rise,—rise, beloved, and let me press you to my breast. Oh! this

is sweet, indeed!""

The eyes of the cardinal were flooded. He regarded the Count of Aula with filial piety, and received from him the affectionate embraces of a father rather than a brother.

"My son, did I hear aright? Did not my Calabrian announce your presence as a prince and cardinal?"

"If so, it briefly notified to my benefactor how much I owe him."

"To your own incomparable merit, my dear son, to the sacred source whence you derived your being, and to the favour of Heaven, not to me, do you owe your rewards."

At this time Anselmo entered, and exchanged with the count and car-

dinal the most devoted salutations.

"Where is Pulci?" asked the count, addressing the cardinal Ippolito; and scarcely had the words passed his lips when the monk entered.

"Oh! this is, indeed, a happy day; how brief are our trials in this life, if submitted to with resignation!" With these words he advanced towards Pulci, and, bending forward to receive his blessing, embraced him.

Pulci appeared some years older than Aula, and stricken with infirmities. His noble head bespoke from its mere form the possession of the highest intelligence, closely allied to virtue. His hair was very white, and his eye, undimmed by time, seemed calculated to penetrate every recess of human thought.

"When did you last hear of Angus?" inquired the count, looking

anxiously to the cardinal and Pulci for a reply.

"This very day," answered the cardinal. "He promises you a visit soon; but does not fix the time."

"How like him!" said Aula; "but to see him again would be among

the chief amenities of my latter end."

And then, by spontaneous movement, as if preconcerted, the party proceeded to a distant part of the castle. They reached a new cloister, formed of columns and arches, at the termination of which their progress was arrested by double gates of bronze. The Count of Aula drew forth the steel key, and the gates opening, there was discovered to the view a flight of steps illumined by lamps. The friends entered, the doors were closed and locked again on the inside.

They were about to inspect a temple, to which the count's exclamation referred when he expressed a misgiving lest the erection of that fabric

might have been prompted by human pride.

By pride, indeed, prompted; but was it human or divine?

On returning to the library, the friends were greeted by the cheerful voice of Angus, who had just reached the castle. All were much delighted; the Count of Aula was indeed sensibly affected at a meeting so long

delayed.

"And now, my dear friends, that we have thus happily met," said the count, "let us not part until compelled by necessity. If this be old age, truly it is the most agreeable period of our being; it unites within itself the charms of past and future, the quiet of the tomb and the serenity of ceaseless being. The health good, the mind firm, the passions called hence, what peace is felt! The past lives in memory like a ploughed-up sea; its wave is suspended in air; hushed though troubled. Over that past flows a deep silence which floods the steps of eternity. Those from whom I have been long parted by death, I am again near to; their shadows fall upon my prayers, and I see the transfiguration of Hope as I stretch out my heart to God. They live, to meet them again appears almost, in my present state, a trial; but so much bliss will not surely be prepared without strength being given to bear it. Oh, God! Thou knowest what it is to be a Father!"

The expression of these sentiments was heard with satisfaction by all present, and Pulci, who had known the count from a boy, extended his

hand to him in token of heartfelt approbation.

"Now, my dear friend," said Angus, "I am come to claim the fulfilment of a promise. You remember when we last parted, I recounted to you some events of my life, and you pledged yourself, should we meet again, to narrate the remainder of your history to me."

"It is too long," said the Count of Aula; "however, it is now all written, and you shall one day peruse it." Saying this, he pointed to

one of the boxes which were on the table in the library recess.

The party did not separate for some weeks, and Angus was the last to

depart.

The count visited Florence again, and the palace where his mother gave him birth. The cherished recollection of the parent accompanied him there from the regretted Valanidi. It is certainly true that the old are less affected than the young by misfortune. There is oftentimes a dignity in old age, the calm intellect of which rejects the cares of life in proportion as it perceives its vicinity to another world. This quality, aided by elasticity of mind, enables the great to conquer the vain regret. It was the count's own explanation; but he acknowledged at VOL. XXIII.

the same time, that mercy had lent him a willing hand, and thus led him forth again into life. The comforter had commanded him to mourn no more.

He had suffered penance for every wicked act and thought; though half of his best days had gone in sin, the other half had been at the disposal of the great avenger. He had gone through an earthly purgatory, and satisfied justice to the uttermost claim. He felt now almost as a child beginning the world afresh, not as before, liable to the reverses of a moral fortune, but at once established on a rock, secure, if grace remained, of the long desired salvation.

Health, the most sacred of temporal blessings, he enjoyed in a high degree. His step was firm, his frame erect; and his hopes were of that glowing description to which the sick man is a stranger. He felt a long life still within him, as if, having almost attained to the age of man, it was to be his destiny to still live on and enjoy a new life, and taste at last the true blessings of existence; the secret came home at last, that to be content is to be happy. He no longer, indeed, dreaded any new affliction.

At Florence he gave much attention to the wonderful works of his father. The calm statues which his parent had chiselled, and the artificial stillness of the chamber where they stood, struck him for the first time with a marvel which he never failed to experience afterwards when he beheld them. He was then able to conceive himself unworthy the sympathy of so god-like a mind; of one whose thoughts, quiet as the disembodied spirit, had succeeded in thus stamping reality with their divine self-possession. His father's genius gleaned upon him from the tomb; he saw in it a nature deeply impassioned, one in which the love of peace had deprived the flames of their sting, in the midst of them conducting its possessor through those cold marbles unalarmed, unscathed.

Then did he discover his father at home, as he had found his mother in a far-off land.

Unwilling to prolong his stay at Florence, whither he had been accompanied by Angus, he returned to the Volterrana. There he was made welcome, there greeted peacefully by the shades of the dear departed. Pulci, after a time, joined him again, though not long to survive. He lived to heartily bless his early pupil; it was a blessing full of comfort, reaching from earliest years into old age, and throwing a mantle of light over his entire recollection.

At the count's urgent request, Pulci finally quitted the city, and made the castle his home. His presence, once in some measure oppressive, owing to religious causes, was then so cheering to the lord of Aula, that he could not bear him from his sight for a single day. The monastic character of a considerable part of the mansion was suited to Pulci's tastes, uniting, in the beautiful cloisters, the means of contemplation with the enjoyment of the garden and forest.

And in the garden of those cloisters, in front of a fountain, Pulci now rests. There, on a tablet it is written, "Here lieth a well-doer: let no one move his bones." Seated under the pointed arches, the surviving friend meditates on the life he himself has passed, an ordeal of seventy years. For some time his eyes have rarely wandered beyond the fountain, or the delicately worked figures and foliage which enrich and vary the capitals of the coupled columns of that open cell. It is a sober spot,

a centre of shade, and light, and sparkling waters, the shelter of weeds and creeping plants which sympathise in his retirement as they nestle in the crevice, and hide the elaborate patterns of each marble pillar.

Anselmo survived for a time, but bowed down with age. The count and he sometimes took their quiet walk together in the churchyard to watch the lichen gather upon the names of those who had been among the treasures of the earth, concealed in the sacred turf until the final explanation came of what had been.

Among the graves there was a strange tomb inscribed with a name little known; it was the printer's place of rest. He had arrived and had died, as if to complete an evil destiny, on the day that the tower last fell.

The count employed himself constantly in adding new features to the frescoes of his tomb, and in improving its imperishable decorations. He adhered still to the determination to which he had come twenty years before, to sleep in death apart from his lost family. They were innocent, and they lay among their friends, the virtuous and forbearing poor. But he, though changed by virtue of a glorious religion, could never be innocent more; the taste of the fruit which is from the tree of knowledge,

And in this peaceful old age, devoid of ambition and prepared to sacrifice his works, the intellectual result of his long existence, he was not the less conscious of his glorious gifts. Genius is the greatest work of God; it was not therefore due to mankind that he should deny an attribute specially conferred upon him by his Creator. Had he done his duty, he would long ago have proclaimed it aloud through works having a tendency to exalt those beneath him in mental powers. Such, however, in default of moral training, it had not been his lot to do, and such, unless through his memoirs, he could not now accomplish. This gift was made him at birth, it had survived every trial, he acknowledged its possession still; so should its memory apart from its possessor be honoured and remembered in the tomb. As on the last hour rest the events of all time preceding, so was his last mansion to be the depository of his life, and to express its kindred associations.

CHAPTER XIX.

The wheel of life, as sometimes wont to do before it stops, had begun to revolve more slowly; events of moment became fewer, so that the remainder of existence appeared like the bright interminable quiet of the longest day. Still there was one more scene worthy of record which occurred during the last visit to the count of the heroic Angus. That famous traveller had completed his design; he had seen the world itself, and had done. He was, like his friend, aged; he had left some remembrance of his steps in every land, and he had ploughed every sea. Now, worn out in body, still mighty in mind, he was on his way to his island home, that he might end his days where they had begun. The last surviving passion of the wanderer was home; that which few reach who had been like him the world's denizen. He wished the count to go with him, but that was impracticable, so he remained at Aula as long as time and season would allow.

Angus was the last, save Ippolito, of those who had trodden in the

path now about to be closed in again—to be new-swarded; the last of those who belonged to a memorable Procession of Souls. It was time for him to write his life, and die. But he had not found leisure hitherto. His notes were elaborate, and almost all his letters were preserved. Like other men of adventure he thought that much was worth visiting, and little worth narrating; his memory, so vivid, seemed to throw the pic-

torial power of words into shadow.

Often and long did the friends converse; they talked of their own race as effete where civilisation was, fresh where the soil of thought had been abruptly broken up, and left untilled: its history only a legend. Angus thought unfavourably of the East, which he knew so well; the literature, however, not shallow, though the man, except as a creature of worship, was worn out. He looked towards the North as the true source of human energy. His favourite literature was the ancient Scandinavian, in which he saw, in its pure state, the primitive thoughts and superstitions which had given heroism to modern nations. In the Sagas, and Edda, and Viser, he found the history and faith of the ancient monarchies of the sea; and in the Valhalla, a parental fabric of the Christian heaven. The study of this legendary lore had a surpassing charm for his heart.

Nor was the subject of little interest to the count, novel as it was. Angus was full of it, and soon inspired his friend with his own enthusiasm—so delightful is a fresh subject to the old in intellect. While his ideas reached back into the regions of the iceberg and the literature of the northern sea-kings, the count's flowed into the rising sun. Etruria was the child of Egypt, whence first came science, and art, and immortal letters; and thus later descended was Italy and Rome. But more recently every region had been united in that southern climate of the moral earth, over which the sun of righteousness shines. The good had met in that new paradise, had worshipped side by side in a Catholic temple built of the timber of the north, the marble of the south; its architecture, though of Corinth, found in the Indies, in Balbec, and Palmyra, and naturalised throughout the world: the Grecian temple and Gothic cathedral no longer in marvellous contrast, but blended in one.

On these things they exchanged and reconciled their knowledge, and much did both respect that serene and pensive religion which had discovered that a Christian heart was common to the illustrious of every age. And as they conversed, the count said within himself, "Thou hast seen the resting-place of the dead in many lands, but hast yet to behold the sepulchral heaven of one who though sacrificed to fame has lived in the burning light of the spirit; in genius rarely and only specially bestowed." Indeed, he who had seen the sun rise and set in every country, had yet to raise his hands and eyes in wonder at beholding that bright

though sunless tomb.

CHAPTER XX.

THE morning rose in the utmost splendour of the south; the air was still and balmy, laden with the fragrance of yesterday; the sky was deeply arched, and of a spotless blue. Nature filled the earth and heavens to overflowing, and excited in the heart the most touching sadness, and with little cause, as if peace were too profound, joy too intense, life too

sweet, or the world too beautiful to last. Ere they descended into the place of death they walked forth to draw the air so soft and healthful and to look upon the ostentation of summer. As they cast their eyes on high, the thoughts showered down by the heavens moved within them the music of emotion.

And they descended, not as they had done the first time, by the steps of a ladder; the old passages were replaced by open arches and columns of whitest marble upon a floor of solid jet, and the sky was seen through the space around. Pacing this long cloister they arrived at the massive bronze gates, which were covered with minute devices. The key was

drawn forth, they entered, and the gates closed behind them.

They were in the sanctuary, at the summit of a broad flight of easy steps with ledges on either side, whereupon stood antique figures of the Etruscan gods. These steps were of red marble, and vaulted over with the same material; the light of a candalabrum gave sombre magnificence to the descent, and an appropriate illumination to the ancient figures. This led into the first tomb, which Angus, long before, had assisted to discover. By the removal of three massive shields, doorways had been exposed which led into a system of tombs. The first, which was the largest, opened into three double chambers; and on entering the right or left a side tomb came into view. The tombs were of considerable dimensions, the further one in the centre being the most stately. The candalabrum in each was lighted up, and the wonderful contents displayed.

Suspended from the roofs, which were vaulted, and looked fresh and perfect as a work of yesterday, were shields and exquisite vases; on the floors images of burnt earth, bronze vessels, cups, sacrificial altars, and also vases; and on tripods, vessels in which the old incense had once more

been set to burn.

On the walls, too, vases, and embossed shields were hung, and frescoes of brightest colour were painted to represent the dance, the music, and the banquet with which the funeral was honoured, or the procession of the soul towards the doorway of Hell. Besides these there were friezes and bas-reliefs displaying the customs of the ancient land, allegories of peace and war, virtue and crime, figures of animals both sacred and domestic—the lion, the stag, and the horse, either mounted, or close to its rider.

But most strange of all, the name of the warrior who had laid on the bronze bier, but whose armour and arms had crumbled away, was Aula Velthinas.

And in the chief tomb with its bier, and its car which had brought in the body, its silver vases, its images, its shields and arrows, its tripod again supporting the perfumed exhalation, there was a monument of white marble with the reclining figure of a youth upon it, the countenance mild and lordly, the look expressing familiarity with the repose of death. And on the base of this were sculptured the horses without their rider, unbridled, almost soaring into the air: movement in their eternity, in that of their master repose.

Surmounting the base of the monument was engraved, in letters from

right to left, "Lars Aula."

Angus read it aloud, himself the elder of an ancient and noble line,

and looked his friend in the face with a congratulatory tear.

Behind this monumental marble there was a new door not yet opened. The key was resumed, the wings parted. What did they then behold? No vulgar emotion thrilled within them as they saw and walked over a mosaic pavement of coloured marbles. The lofty space was lighted with hundreds of wax-lights, which rose out of golden candlesticks, and was covered with a dome and roof of fresco, lapis lazuli, and gold. The walls, except where they were occupied by painting, were lined with red and yellow marble; at the end of the tomb there was an altar fitted up and furnished for mass, performed rarely with such implemental splendour as was there seen, save when the soul of an earthly monarch has departed.

Behind the altar hung a picture of the Crucifixion, not unknown; on this they gazed with trembling eyes; it looked as if a divine hand had

added the last tints to confirm the efficacy of redemption.

They looked around. On the walls they saw a procession of contemporary and kindred forms, such as the lord of Aula had witnessed on the Alpine snow; the Procession of Souls on its steep and slippery path to a higher world.

In the dome above they saw painted the hoped-for residence of immortal spirits, the centre of divine existence, and seat of content—ever-

present content.

Beneath this dome were the monuments, all of purest marble; and round the tombs were ranged colossal statues, in rows; these had been sculptured with all the art of antiquity, and they represented the human virtues released by religion and death from passion. Cold as the marble, yet godlike as their origin, they seemed destined to stand there until the stream of ages, the for ever of this earth, had merged into the eternity of time.

At the steps of the altar-piece were two gilded boxes, empty and open. On the lid of one was engraved The Ordeal; and Works on that of the other. There, finally, was to be deposited at the foot of the Cross

the vain sacrifice of genius.

They saw the monuments; they were of plain design, and surmounted by four reclining figures. Two children were grouped affectionately on one tomb, which was inscribed with golden letters, thus: ORAZIO AND ANGELINA: OF THE HOUSE OF DAVID; HEIRS OF AULA AND VALA NIDI.

The next figure was that of the mother; and beneath it was simply written Adora. On it the Omniscient would gaze, it needed no description.

The last figure, that of the Count of Aula, occupied another monument; it was of colossal dimensions, and its bearing was godlike. Its expression was that of The Undying, and The Track of a Drifted Spirit was reflected discernibly in its gaze. On the huge pedestal was incised, Adonal, Count of Aula, Prince of Valanidi; and underneath the name this sentence, conceived in a sublime mood—Here let the Man of Genius rest.

The Resurgam.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

AFTER a further lapse of many years, when almost all who had been associated in memory with the castle of Aula, and its glorious prince had shared the common lot of man, there was one left who, while expecting yearly to be summoned, still found his end postponed. It was the Traveller. That illustrious character had for some time past received no tidings of his friends, and finding his energies spared him, and his strength equal to the voyage, he undertook to visit Aula for the last time, which enterprise accomplished, he would be willing to return home and wander no more on earth.

Selfishness, which is the great time-server, had long since made way in the Traveller's heart for the everlasting; his sentiments were the voice of the near and far—the expression of all—and as such they resounded through him like the calm of what is eternal. In such a state of mind, the attributes of which were unchangeable, he set out on his way to Aula, the home, when he was last there, of one whose words—whose looks had been snatched up into the immortal page, the vast sheet which is not turned over, is not ever out of sight, is not corroded in the midst of decaying vapours, is not blended with the forgotten, but is fresh and legible among the common things which are recorded only to be lost.

The Traveller was there; not asking within himself to converse with the man who was once thus mortal, not proposing to his tired limbs to rest inside the once hospitable gate; of such prospect he could form no idea; he at most desired to compare together the life and death of one worthy of both extremes, and in the scene of their triumph; if possible, to stare that invisible thing immortality, which he knew must still linger there, in the face.

Yes, dubious and ideal as might appear his object, the calm-minded Traveller once more visited the spot which of the many places he had seen was incomparably the most dear to his associations; but not with any vivid hope of greeting the friend of his youth. He had a steed under him, not the beautiful Arab he had ridden in the pride of life; that noble creature, fit in its day to have shared in imperial games, was dead, to the last faithful; expiring, while death dealt out its agonies, with his eye fixed on his master. Noble is the horse; it is the living emblem of the earth; while this in its races round the sun's circus is at once the type and after-glory of the other-for thus do all things great have a monument in nature. The brute friend, unlike the human, can be replaced at whatever period of life; and the Traveller was borne to Aula, not by one associated with the old Procession of Souls which had so long halted, and must so soon close, but by a successor in the fiery race, whose instinct was equally to love and serve a master. The Traveller crossed not the torrent as he had done of old, age and its quiet bearings had made him more discreet; but he forded it nearer to its source where the waters are shallow. As he yet rode under the castle's site on the opposite side, his quick glance detected signs close at hand of devastation, and his eye trembled over the more distant and unseen ground, lest ruin should be

there. He saw the winged lions in the flood, the steps heaped one over another, and the parapet wall rent in twain. What was it that he looked upon-" O God!" exclaimed he, " is this death?" It prefigured such an end as the mighty might claim, an end ushered in by moments of trouble to the earth, whose pang splits the rock and rends the air, and across whose face a passing darkness tells the living that a glory is for a time eclipsed. It prefigured such an end; but where are the mighty who have died up to this hour; their monuments continue, their souls still lie sepulchred in hope; hear you the blast from afar which is to rend that tomb in twain? The Traveller heard that blast, it shook his heart with vibrations, and had scarce died out when, descending the winding paths of the hill-side, he reached the churchyard, and there he paused. All was undisturbed; he looked at the peaceful, unpretending graves, and beneath them saw mentally the smiling faith of the dear departed, investing their remains like a film destined one day to become luminous. In the distance he saw change already abroad, as if the descent into hell had been accomplished, and there had been an impatience of the grave itself. In one place the upper half of a tower was on the ground, it lay there entire, and as lightly as if it had been lifted off by gigantic fingers. As he crept slowly on, he observed the goodly castle no longer, but in its place a ruin not less majestic, in some parts rising high, in others fragmentary, and admitting the sky through its walls and windows. Yet the hour appeared not angry, but only fraught with doom; the devastation seemed not to express complaint, it marked an acquiescence natural The Traveller looked on musing, and unmoved, unless by a thrill of reliance; he dismounted, and led his horse after him to the doorway, through which he had often entered the once hospitable pile. The day as he stood at the gate began to wane; and what he beheld so resignedly took upon itself a deeper shade. He was still able to perceive that the ground amidst the more distant ruins had risen to a great height, and on walking in that direction, followed by his lagging horse over the coarse path, he saw that the dark ground was strewed around to a considerable distance with forms of virgin whiteness, whose shape was human as of old, though destruction had done its worst. In the dimness of the hour, had not he who looked remembered their loveliness and promise in the days of life, when he beheld them under cover of the tomb, they might have been regarded by him as the bony fragments of a lost generation, and as realising the dream of a poisoned valley whose air would remain pestilential, never to yield a reviving gust to these remnants of a past being. But the Traveller, with the gaze of an immortal, still recognised in them a host of human virtues, washed long since by the heaving waters of salvation; the figures of the tomb which would one day be eagerly gathered up. There Charity, with her right arm snapped off, rested powerless on the sward; there, on her beautiful face, reclined Hope, a stone her present pillow; and there, Faith, recognisable by a mere fragment, yet most vivid, lay in the broken form of two hands locked together as by an undying spasm. Hundreds of beautiful things surrounded these three, which had been kept together in a convulsion which thus had opened the grave; limbs equal to those of the Venus and Apollo, heads and torsos as of the dying Gladiator with his heavenly looks though an earthly doom; but all-all indicative of creation's ways, of the living soul in its utmost jeopardy sent forth to stem decay, and to float upon the earthquake.

The Traveller was again astride his horse; his head hung down, he rode among the forms which were so thickly strewn around, and mused

intently, but felt no sorrow.

"Yes, Art has its bones; its forms go to pieces like the flesh; and it has its resurrections; all that was great in it of old has risen again out of the earth, has arisen in the full promise of life, and in the blush of

youth; Time even mellows the seeds of its immortality."

The night was not long dark; it set in with a red, colossal moon; by degrees the luminary grew brighter, and became of less visible magnitude as clouds ventured forth; the sky was blue and starry. The images assumed a new expression; they had, at first, been seen as things flung out of a common grave and left to chance; but now a light fell upon them of which the tone was celestial; it touched them, and the death-like aspect was gone, supplanted by a breath around which might almost join limb to limb, and bid the dead arise.

The lips of the Traveller moved, it was in petition for another; his heart warmed as if filled with its long-lost youth; he looked upwards in all the fervour of prayer; but, behold! that other, whom he prays for, stands glorified before him, above him; his friend is on the Mount which he had himself now reached, he sees him bathed in the dropping light—with looks unconscious of all below. The Traveller shudders; in a fever of ineffable joy he draws nearer to the vision; he sits erect, and close

under THE UNDYING!

The monument, uninjured among mutilated forms, had ascended from the tomb beneath, and thus had the genius of the place appeared on earth again fraught with the divine significance of a Transfiguration; in the presence of all men and all time, giving reality to the Resurgam—that eloquent vow of the dead who can never die!

THE INSTITUTION AT METTRAY.

BY WILLIAM DESMOND, ESQ.

At a time when public attention not only of our gracious queen's consort, the lords of state, the men of might and power in the realm, our senators and philanthropists, but even the majority of our community at large, have turned their minds to the question of "national education," and with a holy purpose endeavoured to follow out the blessed precepts of the Gospel, by a merciful interposition to save rather than kill, and with a well-founded belief that often the vices and offences of the criminal spring from early neglect than deep-rooted depravity, a cursory glance at that excellent institution in France at the small village of Mettray may not be deemed out of place, but rather tend to the amusement and edification of our readers.

Mettray is situated about five miles from the picturesque town of Tours (Indre et Loire), which you approach by a very pretty though somewhat hilly drive, and although this district is infected by a low sort of typhus fever which the French faculty have written most ably upon,

nevertheless Mettray is a happy exception to such a calamity. Strangers are allowed to visit the institution at any time, and civil and intellectual guides show you around the place, and afford you every information you may require. To offer one of these a gratuity is a pointed insult; one he will endeavour to resent by a withering look of scorn, and no doubt a mental comparison between the nation of "shopkeepers" (as at least the first Emperor called us, whatever the third may reciprocate our favours by an appellative) and the nation of "glory"—in this instance it is to be feared with rather an odious inference as regards the former. But boxes for the benefit of the colonie are placed in conspicuous places to receive your alms and donations, and the handiwork-beautiful as some of it is-of the inmates is generally expected to be purchased by the visitor.

The institution of Mettray is for the reclaiming of the youthful felons and vagrants of France. Any child convicted of theft, dishonesty, petty larceny, &c., &c., is committed, if found guilty, for a certain term to Mettray; in short, until such times as he becomes a useful member for society. Lord Brougham (the guide informs each visitor) took up his residence near Mettray for ten days, for the purpose of fully investigating the system, with the intention of endeavouring to found a similar institution near Birmingham. Why such a noble and philanthropic plan has not been carried out by our legislature, is one of those curious incongruities which has marked each successive ministry's better acts.

On the urchin's arrival he is told in so many words, "The world is open to you still; you need not stay with us except you wish; if you desire to become a good and useful member of society, to earn your bread honestly, we will endeavour to make you one; if not, return to your vicious haunts and companions, and if you are again convicted you will be sent to either a prison or the hulks."

The guide will further inform the visitor that not above one boy in a hundred deserts or are dismissed with ignominy from the institution, so worthily does the system work. Once enrolled upon the books of the institution, they are supplied with a copy of its rules which is duly read

and explained to them. Thus it commences:

"The duties of this institution are honourable; they are the same which instigate the French army, who always obey those in command, and are subservient to discipline. Without there is discipline there can be no army, nor can there be any institution nor yet any community of the people whatever. With good discipline, well observed, an army must invariably be crowned with glory, while an institution will so work out its mighty deeds, and its people shall be surely great among nations.

"It is necessary that this institution should be well aware that in our well-beloved France, which numbers thirty-three millions of souls, no one is exempt from a perfect obedience to her laws, to her customs, and to her rights. Every soldier obeys his corporal who commands him in the name of the law. Again, the corporal obeys the serjeant in his turn, and the serjeant the lieutenant, the lieutenant again in his turn the captain, the captain the commanding officer of the squadron, the chief of the squadron the major, the major the colonel, the colonel the general, the general the commander-in-chief of France, and he again to the cabinet of ministers, and they to the president, and the president to God, his duty, and his conscience. Is the private soldier then less obedient than the president? This is the scale of the loyal obedience which influences our army, and ought necessarily to strike home to the heart of every inmate of this glorious institution.'

After so minutely instancing the army in France, and its different grades, the work proceeds to mention how the labourer, the mechanic, the tradesman, the freeholder, the farmer, and the landlord, were all alike subservient to those in authority; nay, further, so observant is this institution to obedience, that it carries on its arguments in their different grades, from children to parents, from the deputy prefet to those in his arrondissement, from the deputy prefet to the prefet, the prefet to the government, and the government to the Prince President.

The boy must arise as soon as the réveil sounds, dress himself quick, and have a pride never to be the last down at roll call. Before proceeding to his work, he must carefully arrange his bed, and more particularly offer up a fervent prayer to the Great Dispensator of all good things. After these are accomplished, the next principle to be instilled into him is steadiness and smartness in his deportment, and silence at all times, to resemble as much as possible the ranks of a well-disciplined army, and avoid the dis-

graceful comparison of one of " a flock of sheep."

The first thing in the day the lad is marched to a piece of ground set apart for tilling, and each gang is placed under the surveillance of a senior boy, who is designated the chef-d'atélier, whom they are enjoined most peremptorily to obey without any remark or yet any murmur. Having worked a given time in the fields, the boys return to the house for breakfast, after which they are granted a quarter of an hour for play and recreation; after this, they again return to the fields for two hours' labour, and then return to eat their dinners, which, like those in the Services of all nations, are prepared in messes by comrades, a cook being told off to each room. Dinner over, they are allowed until three P.M. for play and recreation, when they again return to labour until six P.M. At that hour they proceed in perfect military order to the class-room, where they are taught to read, write, and the four first rules of arithmetic, as well as their duty to God and man, which occupies their time until eight P.M., when prayers are read to the whole Institution, and the boys retire to rest. The community of which we have just made mention are those who are brought up to agricultural labour, and which preponderate in number throughout the institution. We cannot, however, leave this portion of our subject without giving our tithe of admiration to the excellent manner in which the "model farm" is worked, certainly being on an equal in its high state of cultivation, as that of the gentleman of razors and strops at Tiptree Hall, the houses or stabling for the fat cattle particularly striking upon the attention of the visitor.

Now the boys, if wishful, can be instructed in peculiar trades. Passing over the science of music—which is but seldom taught, and then only superficially, we turn to that of the baker. After instructing the boy in the art of kneading and baking his bread stuffs, the following advice is given him: "Always exercise your calling with honesty and a good conscience (that is to say, always use the best ingredients in your manufactory, and never give false weight), so that men hereafter shall say, 'His bread is good, and so is his weight—formerly he was brought up at

Mettray." There are also shoemakers, a large manufactory of sabots—the wooden shoe of the peasant—turners, carvers in wood, and the mainmast of a man-of-war properly fitted up with sails and rigging, to enable the embryo sailor to reef the topsail.

Attached to the hospital, which is under the peculiar care of some sisters of charity, are a certain number of boys, who act as orderlies, and they are enjoined to endeavour to imitate the sisterhood in their attentions to the sick, and in their kind consolations, so as to quiet the peevish and morose.

"Like the sisters of charity," say their orders, "the attendant on the sick ought to speak gently, kindly, and encouragingly—he ought to have a temper conspicuous for its evenness. By night, by day, at all times, he ought to have the same patience, the same gentleness, the same earnestness; in short, like those women, he ought to overcome all his disgusts. No sore or wound ought to make him shrink from his task, and his place must be there—and there always—where human nature is suffering, for verily there is heroism to be found in the accomplishing the ends of convalescence, even in a hospital, as the divine example set us by

The visitors will then proceed to the cook-house, where they will see excellent and wholesome food prepared by the boys themselves, under the direction of matrons. The lads are told to be respectful and obedient to these same matrons, and execute their orders with punctuality and quickness; and they are reminded, that although their calling is delicate, yet it is laborious, requiring taste and mind. Of punishments, there are five. First, by remaining upon picquet when the others are at play. Secondly, by bread and water only when on picquet. Thirdly, they are forbid to enter the parlour. Fourthly, by confinement in the black hole, accompanied with reduction for a frère aîné, or monitor of a room, and with erasion of the names of those who are on the "honourable list." And fifthly, by imprisonment in the centre-house. The punishments are, our guide informed us, but "few and far between" during the year.

In conclusion, then, it is our firm and mature conviction that no kingdom or power ought to be without one or two of these institutions in different parts of their country, to reclaim and educate the children of sin and iniquity, cradled in the filth and dirt of the gutter and the cesspool, and brought up in every conceivable crime and debauchery in the purlieus of St. Giles's or the New Cut, in Birmingham or Manchester, in Liverpool or Sheffield. Half savages, who delight in rows and fights, theft and pillage, and are only in comparison with the beasts of the field, or the buzzards and ostriches of the air-who know no better. Crime would then decrease; the "brutal murder," or the "desperate burglary" would no longer gleam forth in our daily press as stubborn facts of our national disgrace and vice, and we should be great among nations, not only in the purity of our religion, the liberty of the subject, the wealth of our capitalists, our imports and exports, in our sciences and arts, but even in the more essential and holier cause, of the care of the orphan and destitute in the time of his youth, and not blunt his better parts into sullenness and brutality by want and cruelty, but endeavour to raise him-away from his lost and degraded associates and parents-in the social scale, and make him a fit subject for the society of the community at large.

FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss Julia Addison,

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

CHAPTER XLVI.

'Tis a strange adventure— When will it end, and how? Cold fear And dread forebodings fill my breast— Full well I know my captor's heart Is steeled to pity.

CECIL.

When Florence was placed in the carriage, Sir Robert enveloped her in a large heavy cloak, and threw a thick veil of black crape over her head. Then drawing her close to him, he passed one arm round her

waist, while with the other he held down her hands.

It was useless to struggle, for she was fixed as in a vice, and the hand-kerchief in her mouth prevented her from speaking or screaming. Her feelings of terror, agony, and despair on first finding herself thus in the power of an odious and unprincipled man, were such as almost to deprive her of the power of thinking; presently she reflected that he would surely hold her less closely before long, and that she should then be able to attract the attention of some person who would rescue her from her distressing situation. Evening was closing in, and therefore it was not probable that there would be many people passing on the road; but she would at least be able to make her state known when they stopped to change horses. After proceeding for some miles in silence, Sir Robert keeping her as

firmly in his grasp as ever, he said,

"You find that you are now my prisoner—you could no more escape from me than you could mount in the air and fly. I am determined that you shall be my wife. If you will swear a solemn oath to marry me quietly when we get to Gretna-green, where we shall arrive to-night, it will be well for you; if not—" He paused for a moment, and then continued, in a voice and manner that caused her a thrill of horror -"if not, beware of the consequences-remember that you are in my If you will swear, bow your head, and I will instantly relax my hold, convinced that you would dread to commit the heinous sin of perjury, although if you were guilty of deceit, and on being free screamed for assistance, it would avail you nothing; for supposing-which at the rate we are going is most unlikely-your cries attracted the attention of some passenger among the solitary few we may meet, I could easily persuade them that you were ill and in hysterics; and as I should, of course, instantly secure you more tightly than before, you would not be able to contradict me. At the inns, all the people are prepared to expect a great invalid, too nervous to be spoken to, so that no one will come near us during our short pauses on the journey; and if you have any hopes of rescue, know that Pemberton is a prisoner, and that every horse on the road is engaged by me, so that no person following in our track could possibly obtain any. The admiral is in the secret, and he will contrive

effectually to baffle any feeble efforts Lady Seagrove may make to have us overtaken. (You remember, no doubt, that all her horses and mine were sent home by the railroad yesterday.) It will be equally impossible to discover our locality in case I am driven to other and more desperate measures for enforcing your compliance; and I swear by Heaven that I will not be defeated—that I will find some means of attaining my end; and conclude by once more reminding you that you are in my power!"

He ceased, and seemed to be waiting for the signal. Florence shook

her head.

"You had better consent at once, for your own sake," urged Sir Robert,

in a terrible voice; "or, I warn you-"

Florence once more shook her head. Craven continued at intervals to repeat his threats and arguments, but with no more effect. ceased, and they continued to be whirled along rapidly in profound silence, Sir Robert holding his captive still more tightly. Had she been in possession of perfect health and strength, she could have made small resistance, but as it was, weakened from recent illness, she was as powerless in the iron grasp of Sir Robert, as some small animal in the gigantic folds of a boa-constrictor. Her state of mind became every moment more distracting. They had twice changed horses, and the faint hope she had entertained of some person's remarking that a handkerchief was thrust in her mouth, and arguing thence that all was not right, deserted her. As she afterwards recollected, the thick veil of black crape effectually prevented a single feature from being visible. By a momentary flash of light from one of the lanterns carried by an ostler-for it was now quite dark, and the carriage-lamps threw no light within-she perceived a pair of pistols lying at the bottom of the carriage.

On and on they went, with unabated speed, and the poor girl's heart

sunk within her.

"We are now," said Sir Robert, who had not spoken for a long time, "within little more than a stage of our destination; that is to say, if

you will consent quietly. I ask for the last time."

At this moment a violent shock was felt; the carriage sunk on one side; one of the wheels had come off. Muttering an oath, Sir Robert started up, still keeping his arms round Florence, and demanded angrily of the postilions how they dared allow such an accident to happen.

The men of course replied that it was not their fault; and one of them added that he had not long ago seen a forge where he had no doubt the

accident could soon be repaired.

"Go and fetch assistance," roared Sir Robert. "Make haste. Do

you hear?"

The postilion was not long in finding the forge, but the blacksmith had gone to bed, and some little time necessarily elapsed before he could be roused and brought to the spot.

"You rascal!" shouted Sir Robert, to the postilion, "why were you

gone so long?"

The man commenced explaining, but Craven cut him short by a fierce command to hold his tongue. Seeing that Sir Robert's attention was divided by what was going on, Florence made vehement but unsuccessful efforts to free herself. For a considerable time she had been

nearly suffocated by her heavy coverings, and the close air of the coach. She grew faint, and felt more and more desponding, while her heart

swelled with indignation and abhorrence of her relentless captor.

For a moment she rejoiced at the accident, from a vague, desperate hope that it might give time for some one pursuing to overtake them; but she soon dismissed this idea from her mind as absurd. The wheel was replaced after a delay of nearly half an hour, and they drove off again.

She felt fainter and fainter with the heat and agitation; she could scarcely draw her breath for a dreadful sense of oppression; her eyes closed, and consciousness seemed deserting her, when she was roused by hearing one of the postilions exclaim, "There is a carriage behind us, sir; I saw the lights as we turned you corner, at the top of the hill."

"Drive on, drive on!" cried Sir Robert, releasing Florence, and

starting from his seat. "Drive faster, I say!"

It was scarcely possible to go faster; but the postboys lashed their foaming horses, and urged them to greater rapidity. Sir Robert hastily let down the window and thrust out his head. The moon had risen, and, being nearly full, every surrounding object was scarcely less plainly visible than in the day-time. He saw that the man was right. The road running for nearly a mile in a straight line, he was able to keep the other carriage in view. A misgiving that it was some one in-pursuit of him crossed his mind; he strove to repel it as ridiculous. "Pursued! impossible," he muttered; "I left them no horses. Besides, who is there to pursue? But it is a strange coincidence."

A thrill of reviving hope shot through Florence's heart, though she hardly dared encourage it. She had taken advantage of the first moment of liberty to throw off the cloak, fling aside the veil, and remove the handkerchief from her mouth, and now, with clasped hands, throbbing

heart, and breathing almost suspended, she waited the event.

Craven continued to lean from the window, only turning occasionally to see that Florence made no attempt to quit the carriage—an experiment which, it is hardly necessary to say, would, at the fearful pace at which they were going, have been worse than madness. The carriage which caused him such disturbance, and Florence such joy, having been forced to slacken its speed, in descending a steep and sudden hill, was now consideraly further behind than it had been; but it soon began to gain ground again.

"Drive faster, in the devil's name!" shouted Sir Robert furiously to the postilions. The panting horses were straining every nerve, and the carriage swayed from side to side with the fearful velocity. "Keep on, keep on, we are distancing them," cried Sir Robert. "Twenty guineas—fifty shall be yours if we baffle them! They are pursuing us!" he exclaimed, as if he had, till then, persisted in doubting the fact. "They are

shouting to us to stop. But they will never overtake us!"

"We are coming to a hill, sir!" bawled one of the postboys. "We must slacken."

"No, no, no!" vociferated Sir Robert, as they began to ascend a long and very steep hill. "If you slacken, I'll blow your brains out!"

The postilions, terrified by his violence, applied the whip and spur incessantly; and, for about half the ascent, they maintained nearly the

same speed; but the exhausted horses' strength began to fail. Florence, notwithstanding her own anxious situation, sickened at the sight of the distressed animals wincing under the merciless blows inflicted on them, without the power of quickening their pace. She could now hear, by the rattling of the wheels, before not distinguishable for the noise of their own, that the strange carriage was drawing nearer; the distance between them diminished every moment. Sir Robert, almost frantic, cursed, raved, and swore, like one beside himself. The baronet's carriage was still labouring up the hill, the bottom of which the carriage of his pursuer had now reached. Yielding to an irresistible impulse, Florence hurriedly let down the window on the opposite side from that on which Sir Robert was leaning, and looked out.

The other carriage was slowly and steadily ascending the hill.

"We shall beat them after all!" exclaimed Sir Robert, exultingly. "Drive on; we are at the top of the hill now."

"It is impossible, sir," said one of the postilions, turning half round. "Look at that horse."

He did so; and perceived that one of the leaders was staggering. He swore a horrid oath.

"It is your doing, sir," said the man; "you would come so fast

up hill."

"Don't let them pass! Keep in the middle of the road!" cried Sir Robert. "Keep back! I'll fire on you if you attempt to pass," he shouted to the post-boys behind. As he spoke he grasped one of the pistols. Florence threw herself upon his arm as he was elevating it.

"Do as I bid you, without heeding him," said a voice from the other carriage, which they both recognised as Pemberton's. Before Sir Robert could disengage himself from Florence, the carriage had passed, and then, suddenly turning half round, stood across the road just in front of them, so that to pass was impossible. The postilions, in obedience, as it seemed, to an order given by Pemberton, dismounted, and at the same time Pemberton descended, and walked towards Sir Robert's carriage.

"Stop!" thundered the baronet. "If you advance one step nearer,

by G-d! it shall cost you your life."

"Come on, boys, and do your work," said Pemberton, in a clear, firm voice; "and be witness, both of you, that if he does fire, and kill me, it is murder—deliberate murder."

"Pemberton, you had better not tempt me," cried Sir Robert, holding back Florence with one hand, and raising his pistol in the other. "Return to your carriage, and leave me alone, or—"

"Oh, do not come near him! Go back! go back!" exclaimed Florence,

in an agony of terror.

But Pemberton still advanced, with a calm and fearless air. In the meantime his two postilions were cutting the traces of Sir Robert's horses.

"Knock those fellows on the head with your whips, you knaves," exclaimed Sir Robert, perceiving what they were about. But the mischief was done; while his men, who saw which was the just side of the affair, and who were thoroughly disgusted with Sir Robert's brutality, sat passively on their horses.

"Keep back!" said Sir Robert to Pemberton. "I warn you for the

last time. Do you intend to mind? This is no business of yours.

you mean to mind me, I say?"
"Most decidely not," answered Pemberton, coolly. "Now, my dear fellow, be reasonable. You and I have always been good friends; and be sure that if this young lady or any lady were eloping with you of her own free will and choice, the last thing in the world I should think of would be interfering. But this not being the case in the present instance, you will allow that I could not do less than take Miss Hamilton's part. So now, like a sensible fellow, give up the point, and suffer her to return quietly with me."

"Fool, idiot!" cried Sir Robert; "Do you think that likely?"

"Come," said Pemberton, firmly; "I tell you it is no use resisting; for your horses, even if their harness were not entirely useless, are so jaded that they could not proceed a yard farther; indeed, one of them seems dying, while mine are quite fresh still. Do you yield to reason, or must we contest the point?"

"I will never yield to you or any one else," said Sir Robert, fiercely. "I told you I would fire, and I will be as good as my word if you come

an inch nearer!"

"I advise you for your own sake not to commit murder, for come on

I will," said Pemberton.

He had been standing at a little distance during this short colloquy. but he now walked resolutely forward towards that side of the carriage where Florence was. She had hitherto remained speechless and immoveable, shrinking as far as she could from Sir Robert, who held her fast with his left arm round her waist, but listening intently to all that

On hearing Craven's last words, and seeing that Pemberton heeded them not, she waved him back with a frantic and imploring gesture, and then strove to pull down Sir Robert's uplifted arm. But she was a moment too late. He pulled the trigger; a flash and a loud report followed. Florence shrieked in agony; Pemberton reeled and staggered back some

paces.

"I am not hurt," he exclaimed, rather faintly, and passing his hand across his eyes; "at least not materially. Florence, I will yet rescue you!"

He came up to the carriage door and seized the handle.

"Will you tempt your fate again?" cried Sir Robert. "By Heaven, we'll try another shot!" He stooped hastily for the other pistol; but Florence had it already in her hand, and before he could prevent her, had flung it from the window over the hedge of an adjoining field. Taking advantage of the momentary interval, during which surprise and rage at this unexpected action seemed to bewilder the baronet; Pemberton threw the door open, and held out his hand to Florence. By a sudden effort she disengaged herself from her captor, whose grasp was for an instant relaxed, sprung from the carriage with one bound, and clung to Pemberton.

"Mount your horses, my lads," exclaimed Pemberton, to his two pos-

tilions, who were standing by the animals' heads.

With the speed of lightning he caught Florence in his arms, bore her to the carriage, placed her in it, entered himself, closed the door, shouted, "Drive on!" to the postilions, who instantly put spurs to their horses, VOL. XXIII.

and dashing past the carriage in which Sir Robert stood, still stupified with the suddenness of what had passed, gallopped down the hill; and were out of sight and hearing before the baronet had recovered his senses.

How the last-mentioned gentleman swore and raved and stamped with passion, on finding himself thus defeated; how he threatened and abused the two postboys, one of whom, after in vain trying to repair the cut traces sufficiently to drag the carriage on as far as the next stage, which was only a mile and a half distant, set off on foot to summon assistance; leaving the carriage and horses in the care of his companion; how after waiting a short time, and storming with rage because the man did not return when it was impossible he could have accomplished half the distance, Craven walked on with the intention of going to the inn; and how, taking a wrong turning, he missed his way and got lost amidst the labyrinth of green lanes and narrow by-roads, where he wandered for several hours, working himself up into a perfect frenzy of impotent rage, and uttering threats and curses which there was no one to hear or attend to—it is unnecessary to relate more particularly.

AN ÆSTHETIC TEA.

"Depend upon it, your once popular dynasty of plain-sailing authors has had its day," said Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer; "and even now the night is coming when it, with its clumsy, old-fashioned tools, can no longer work. Its sun verges on the horizon of the west! Eve saddens into night. Your plain-sailing, merely objective authors, are doomed en masse to Charon and his boat, which forthwith will convoy those lean souls to the realms of Hades and cold oblivion. Life is not plain-sailing, and writers on Life must not put themselves in antagonism with their subject. Life is the sphinx; and they who see no mystery in her utterances—they who essay not to guess her riddles—what can their lot be but swift destruction?"

This was very grand on the part of Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer, and impressed me, of course, very profoundly as I entered the drawing-room, where all ears and eyes were fascinated by his oracular syllables. had I managed, by hook or by crook, to decline an invitation to Mrs. Eleusinia Mistry's æsthetic tea parties, for I stood in considerable awe of that lady's cerulean hose, and of the posse comitatus of bas bleu genius said to gather under her wing. But this night she had insisted, as only a blue stocking and a strong-minded woman can, that I should "drop in" for my dividend of bohea and transcendentalism—the special ground of her demand being the guaranteed presence of that distinguished, or (the same thing) to-be-distinguished littérateur, Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer. That gentleman is, I believe, related by "elective affinities," or some other intricate phase of kindred, to the august continental family of the Chiaroscuros. My hostess had prepared me to expect "great things" from the tea-table-talk of this, her guide, philosopher, and friend; and certainly the above concio ad clerum, which was very deliberately welling from his mouth as I made my entrée, arrested my attention.

"Had I three ears, I'd hear thee," whispered a Byronic-looking personage, who was gazing with rapt devotion on the orator's heroic front.

Mrs. Eleusinia Mistry—anxious to avoid interrupting the inspiration of her sage—beckoned to me to take a vacant chair near her, whither I made my way with due pit-pat solemnity, as though treading on eggs. A vast relief it was to recognise close beside me Harry Whitworth, my familiar at Cambridge, who, like myself, had been inveigled into teaparty hero-worship "for this occasion only." Happily the need of silence was temporarily revoked by the appearance of viands, to which Mr. O'Skewer, who looked hungry (as indeed he generally does), betook himself with exemplary, if not contagious zest, as though imbued with the sentiment he loves to expound when his mouth is not full—"Work, man, work!—hast thou not an eternity to rest in?" During the interregnum, therefore, I had time to exchange greetings with Harry, and to look about me at the rest of the conclave. They were a "queer set," as Harry translated Mrs. Mistry's idiom of "abnormal individualities."

"How do you feel?" he inquired, sotto voce. "Something like

Daniel in the den of lions, I'm thinking."

"Do you know any of these feræ naturæ?" I asked.

"Too many by half," answered Harry. "Of course, that monarch of the wood who was roaring when you came in, is the magnificent O'Skewer; and after feeding-time the animal will shake the dew-drops from his mane, and describe a circle with his tail, and roar again to your heart's content—aye, or to that of Bottom the weaver, were he here, and grown metaphysical. Then that Byron, junior, who watches Leo so intently, is Mr. Quotem-who, like Dr. Pangloss, never speaks but in bits from the classics; he is a poet, you must know, and has borne a helping hand in the decline and fall of many a magazine. That hairy-faced fellow opposite, the Ursa Major of this shining firmament and blue ethereal sky, is Mr. Lacon; he never uses other than terse, curt, peremptory sentences; he is the Sir Oracle of Spartan logic, and when he opes his mouth let no dog bark-though I, for one, often feel desperately tempted to bark and bite too, when I see that 'great bear' hugging common sense to death in his savage embrace. The only other bright particular star worth your present notice, is yonder clerical gentleman, he with the prodigious gills and the unconscious scowl (as vile a scowl as old Hephzibah Pyncheon's, in Hawthorne's tale)—he is the Reverend Ernest Paradox, and preaches and publishes sermons made up of Coleridge, Emerson, Carlyle, Margaret Fuller, and the Westminster Review. The others here assembled are, I suppose, much of a muchness. You and I are the only heretics and unconverted ones! and it is Mrs. Misty's conviction, that if any one can illuminate us with the new light, it is Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer."

"What a clique!" I muttered, in the naughtiness of my heart. "And I suppose these worthies read nothing more 'plain-sailing' and intelligible

than the revelations of the Poughkeepsie seer."

"Not so exclusive as you think. Here, for instance," taking up a daintily-bound volume from a side-table, "here is Tennyson's 'In Memoriam.' But then"—opening it, and pointing to sundry vigorous pencilmarks—"the only parts really approved are those which ordinary palates reject as indigestible. Omne ignotum pro magnifico. Obscurity is beauty, is genius, is the one thing needful. Double-Dutch is their pure

Tuscan. To be intelligible is to be out of date. If now I could show Mrs. Mistry what Tennyson means by these fragments she has underlined, their glory would straightway vanish, and her india-rubber would be in emphatic request. If Tennyson would but make obscurity the rule, instead of (as at present) the exception, he would be her magnus Apollo, which he is now honourably far from being. But here she comes."

The lady was moving from group to group, on hospitable and æsthetic

thoughts intent, and paused benignly to patronise Harry and me.

"They'll bring you coffee directly," she said. "Ah, you are handling the laureate, Mr. Whitworth. Fine, but unequal. How I wish that our guest there"—pointing to O'Skewer, who was absorbed in tea-cake, plentifully supplied by more than one vigilant lion's provider—"how I wish he would publish his strictures on Tennyson! Yet Alfred really has his redeeming points; and I owe him something, if only for suggesting a description so exquisitely applicable to our friend as this:

We see
The god within him light his face,
And seem to lift the form, and glow
In azure orbits heavenly-wise;
And over those ethereal eyes
The bar of Michael Angelo.

There, mon ami! If Tennyson's two hundred pages had been like that—"

"Why, I apprehend in that case," said Harry, gravely, "his book would have been sold to the trunkmakers. I should like to hear Mr.

O'Skewer's exposition of those lines."

"My dear sir," exclaimed our hostess, "are you so docile to the thunders of the *Times?* Are you so pitiless as to ignore one of the few real beauties of 'In Memoriam?' Or do you fail to see the applicability to our friend?"

"First let me catch an inkling of the sense," replied Harry. "I dare say it will do capitally for 'our friend,' but I can't for the life of me get

over that 'bar of Michael Angelo'-and besides-"

"Naughty heathen," she interrupted, tapping him with her fan, and making for another section of the home department; "but you'll do in time: nous verrons."

Harry was cynical this evening. He made wry faces over the "real Mocha," and vowed, that to analyse it and give it a meaning would tax the chemical skill of Mr. Wakley and the Lancet inquisitors. It was, in short, like our hostess's type of intellect—a dim, dubious, indefinite nescio quid. He conjectured the muddy residuum at the bottom of his cup might be a precipitate of the philosopher's stone.

"You are savage to night," I observed, "or you would hardly have fixed your teeth on Tennyson as you did. I thought he was one of your

favourites."

"So he is, an especial one. But how can one endure to hear his maculæ (for he has them) resolved into beauty spots? These people would affirm that never was Homer himself truly great except when napping. The 'Quandoque dormitat' would be his parhelion of glory. Thus Tennyson's imitators of the third and fourth generation ape his foibles, his virtues being beyond their reach, and probably beyond

their ken. Well does Jeremy Taylor mock the courtiers of Alexander, who counterfeited his wry neck, and the servants of the Sicilian tyrannos, who pretended themselves dim-sighted, and purposely rushed against one another, and overthrew the meat as it was served to his table, only because his highness had weak eyes. I have small patience with these mystics who interpret Tennyson after the devices and desires of their own hearts, and read 'In Memoriam' through Swedenborgian spectacles. Like carrion-flies, they fasten and feed on his sore places. When I admire him, I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober; with them, every hiccough is the efflatus of the god, and includes a microcosm of

meaning."

Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer was now giving symptoms of satiety in the muffin and crumpet line, and, in the hope of seeing his mouth open in a strain of higher mood, a hum of reverential expectancy began to murmur among his devotees. Meanwhile, Mr. Lacon was laying down the law to a select galaxy of clients, respecting the merits of Messrs. Millais, Hunt, and the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. Mr. Quotem was edifying an elderly demoiselle with "nuts to crack," from "Sordello." The Rev. Ernest Paradox was convincing a small congress of sympathisers that the only hope of the Church and the world lay in the teachings of Professor Maurice and Mr. Charles Kingsley; that the true Thirty-nine Articles of to-day were comprised in "Christian Socialism;" and that the old book of Homilies ought to be supplanted by the didactic chapters of "Yeast," and of "Alton Locke." The reverend gentleman backed his propositions by reading some paragraphs from his sermon for Sunday next; and I confess I was vastly amused by the singular resemblance his "delivery" bore to a kind, graphically characterised by Mr. Carlyle, as a "flattest moaning hoo-hoo of predetermined pathos, with a kind of rocking canter introduced by way of intonation." The ladies of the party were all, by external evidence, "women with a mission." Their diversities of coiffure were note-worthy, and served to corroborate a modern novelist's theory of the intimate connexion that exists between genius and hair. The several modes he enumerates were accurately enough represented in the drawing-room of Mrs. Eleusinia Mistry—the lady who reads Greek and writes verses, parting her hair on one side instead of in the centre, with a single curl plastered on her brow, emulous of a butcher boy-the lady who writes history, and talks about the "Chronicles," discovering her propensities by a row of flat curls on her forehead, and by the adjustment of her back hair-the philosophical female, dragging her hair severely off her temples—the poetess, revelling in the prairie-like luxuriance and audacity of her crop. Mais revenons à nos moutons.

Anxious to draw out Mr. O'Skewer, our hostess gave the signal for a renewal of his monologue, by addressing him across the room, in deep contralto tones. "You were about to comment, Mr. O'Skewer, upon the

actual and the ideal of modern fiction."

The magnate thus appealed to drew himself up, and assumed the portentous air of old *Arnulphe*, in Molière's comedy, when that worthy put his finger to his brow, and exclaimed,

Là, regardez-moi là durant cet entretien; Et, jusqu'au moindre mot, imprimez-le-vous bien!

Nor could Agnes, that meek scholar in l'Ecole des Femmes, have listened

more patiently than did the commons of our orator's realm. "Fiction," said the honourable gentleman, resuming the debate like one comfortably assured of his possession of the house, "fiction has hitherto been degraded to mean and vulgar uses, whereas it is capable of reaching heights never travelled by the sun-gazing eagle, and depths that never plummet sounded. Fiction has hitherto been composed, at the best, by men of talent, whereas it is, de jure, the province of men of genius. It deals with the imagination, and the imagination deals with the shadowy, the dimly-significant, the veiled, the enigmatic, the inarticulate. Your plain-sailing common-place is alien to its mysterious yearnings, its inappeasable aspirations, its infinite sympathies. Plain-sailing is not suited to its wild, vague, chartless, beaconless, compassless ocean. Plain-sailing will not do for the regions where the albatross broods athwart the mist,

Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white, Glimmers the white moonshine.

We are beginning to find this out. Our fiction-writers are beginning to see, that if they would be true to their mission, and would magnify their office, they must no longer indite trivialities which he that runs may read, and which uncultivated dunderheads can appreciate and delight in; but that they must take up their parable on higher ground, that their utterances must be consecrated by an esoteric meaning, and fraught with latent symbolism, and attuned to a music that never was on sea or shore. They are beginning to see—better late than never!—that the 'pretty picture-books' of Scott and his imitators will not do for this generation."

Harry gave a husky and ominous hem, indicative of difficulty in keep-

ing the peace.

"Am I not right?" inquired Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer, on whose sensitive tympanum the hem ungratefully grated. "Mr. Lacon, I appeal to you: Is not the Scott dynasty dead and gone?"

"Dead as a herring," was the prompt response; "and the verdict

felo de-se."

Thus encouraged, the orator proceeded with new energy. "Where, I ask, in all his works, is Scott conversant with those shadowy sublimities to which imagination pertains? Where does he puzzle, perplex, confuse, or confound us? Where does he broach thoughts on which you may ruminate for a week, and at the end confess yourself baffled, and look up with awe-stricken ignorance to a veiled prophet? Is it not time that such horn-book fiction, such A B C wisdom, should be forgotten? Is it not the fact that oblivion is even now its sealed and inevitable doom?"

"The fact is," said Mr. Lacon, "all Scott's tales are tales of a grand-father. We Hugh Littlejohns are grown up now, and vote the old

gentleman's milk for babes sky-blue.'

Harry muttered in my ear, more loudly than discreetly, "That Ursa Major is intolerable; I can't stand Bruin at all. Shall I startle them all from their propriety by being yet more laconic, and scream out Mr.

Burchell's monosyllable, Fudge!"

But O'Skewer was at it again. "Scott's own countrymen are becoming ashamed of their traditional idolatry. One of them complains that Scott is utterly deficient in passages of description; another, that in vain you search the 'Waverley' series for traces of Kant and Fichte, and other mind-powers of the age; another North British reviewer protests against the habitually stilted movement of his dialogues, and shows how far some living romancists surpass him in depth of passion, in grandeur and sublimity of thought. I know that there are those"—glancing askance at Harry—" who would scout every attempt to elevate and spiritualise and etherealise fiction——"

Here Mr. Quotem, also glancing at Harry, could not resist exclaiming,

in the rime of the "Ancient Marinere,"

"'Tis right, they say, such birds to slay That bring the fog and mist."

St. Clair nodded a gracious approval, and went on his way rejoicing. "Fiction is slowly, but surely emancipating itself from the common-place, called 'manly straightforwardness,' 'luminous narrative,' 'unaffected good sense,' and such-like puerilities. Let the novelist now model his style, and draw his matériel from the ducky, but golden, mines of Browning and Philip Bailey, and a few cognate spirits. Let him expand into earnest prose the intense thought and feeling of those highest poets, and his every novel shall become, like Emerson's every essay, a prosepoem, instinct with oracular and exhaustless wisdom. Such, at least, is my humble persuasion, and one that supports me in the effort I am now making to produce a work of fiction in some faint degree reflective of my ideal."

But why should I report more of this didactic rhapsody? O'Skewer was one of those whom Delta describes as crying aloud in the streets, "A fico for general sympathy and common sense! The man in the moon for ever!" Suffice it to add, then, that Mrs. Mistry's lion conducted his audience through a labyrinth of similar platitudes, infinitely vague in meaning, and dogmatical in expression. He superbly and cavalierly dismissed the claims of Scott, ut suprà,—of James, as a mechanical day-labourer,—of Jane Austen, as an every-day gossip,—of Marryat and Hook, as professional pococurantists, missionless butterflies, purposeless ephemerals,—of Frederica Bremer, as a mere chronicler of small-beer,—of Cooper, as a plodding Goodman Dull,—of Mrs. Marsh, as a wholesale dealer in artificial spasms and stereotyped interjections. I need not cite those on his good books, particularly as I am not certain as to the orthography of some of their proper names.

Before we broke up, Mrs. Eleusinia Mistry induced him to entrust to Harry and myself, for private perusal, the MS. of the opening chapters of his own forthcoming novel. Arrived at Harry's rooms, we

began to

Sound our dim and perilous way,

through the "undulatory theory" of Chapter the First. What a Delphic flood was that! What a prize-cattle show of Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire! What a milky way of New Lights! The narrative was a hyperbolical plagiarism of that scene in "Wilhelm Meister," where Wilhelm receives his indentures, in Lothario's castle,—a scene pronouncd "the mystery of mysteries" by Lord Jeffrey, who adds, "I doubt whether there is any such nonsense as this anywhere else in the universe." It is my private impression that his lordship would have recanted that doubt, had he lived to peruse Mr. St. Clair O'Skewer's Chapter the First. Quite satisfied, Harry and I refrained from Chapter the Second. "Quel giorno piu non vi leggemmo avante."

GHOST STORIES OF THE NORTH.

GHOST-STORIES and Ghosts! Who has not, at some period or other of his history, been more or less influenced by them? The whole of the past teems with their midnight vagaries and dark doings. We cannot cast our eye backward into its dim retreats, but some of these shadowy horrors are sure to meet our view. And we, as children and heirs of the past, inevitably inherit some of its darkness with its light. The opinions of any given age are the true representatives of the phænix of the ancients. They are formed out of the ashes of their predecessors, and are destined themselves to submit to the same doom as that to which they were subjected. For the present is but the fuller growth and development of the past, as the future will be but the flower and development of the present. The elements of superstition still remain, although the drapery in which the credulous spirit invests itself is liable to alteration.

The same weight of appalling awe and impenetrable gloom hangs over the spirit-world now as that which veiled it from the view of our more superstitious forefathers. It is true that we look with a more critical and wary eye than they looked. The doubts which beset them beset us no longer. The light of a more extended and illustrious knowledge has rendered luminous to us, regions, which, to them, were dark as fabled Tartarus and Phlegethon. But over all our knowledge still hang the mysteries of existence, grand, sublime, inexplicable as heretofore. Wherever there is doubt there is mystery; wherever there is mystery without, and imagination within, wonders are sure to be elaborated or hinted at. We believe no longer in omens, in the power of the talisman or the spell, in witchery and enchantment, because our insight and knowledge have already overtopped these marvels, because they belong to a more embryotic and undeveloped stage of human history and belief than But the region of the unknown and the impenetrable is still before us, as before our ancestors. The world of wonder is not annihilated: it has only shifted its position. It is true that the light of human reason and human intellect glows with a more steady lustre than formerly, conquering vaster spaces of the realm of darkness; but beyond the reach of its utmost illuminations the old glooms gather and congregate. However widely the empire of knowledge may be extended, it will still be belted, and rimmed, and overwrapped by the shadows of the impenetrable.

It is thus that we endeavour to account for those twinges and spasms of superstitious dread which, at certain moments, and under certain circumstances, startle and overpower even the most stubborn and the most enlightened. Although we boast, justly, of the triumphs of science and art in our times, yet the self-same faculties and susceptibilities belong to us, as those that were in the possession of our forefathers,—the same propensities, the same instincts, the same inclinations. And although all these may have been tutored and taught, they have never been radically changed. Although reason has been cultivated to its highest pitch of development, yet imagination still remains. Although the field of positive exploration and discovery has been traversed in wide-spreading circles, yet the vast field of mystery still remains; and while these co-exist,

the one within, and the other without man, there will never be any lack of marvels, however the character of his mental outworkings, the objective forms into which the fantastic groupings of his mind may throw themselves, may vary and alter, according to varying and altering circumstances.

It would be curious and instructive to trace through what processes, and by what stages, the heroes of mythologies gradually degenerate into the objects of superstitious dread and terror. How, for instance, the Storjunkare, or Stourpasse, of the extreme north, became the Wild Hunter of Germany; or his attendant Seites passed down into ordinary night-disturbers. How the terrible Surtur, and his fire-demons of the Eddas and Sagas of Scandinavia, became gradually transmogrified into the spirits who light the grave-fires, and ultimately into the playful and mis-

chievous Will o' the Wisp.

In the secluded and rural districts of North Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, there existed, not more than fifty years ago, heroes of Folk-Lore, to the full as noticeable as any that flourish in the collections of the brothers Grimm, or those of Croker, or Hans Christian Andersen. These have passed away, alas! for ever. Not so, however, their brethren of fuller growth and stature. We doubt much whether the most authentic account of a meeting of the "Greenies" in the valley, by the moonlit spring, narrated in the remotest farm-house by the peat-fire on the hearth, in the longest night of winter, would now win a single believer. Such has been the spread of scepticism in the nineteenth century. The fairy world has vanished for ever! No more twinkling feet by moonlight on the dewy sward; no more tiny voices heard in busy conference behind the hawthorn hedge at midnight; no more merry washings of linen fit for dolls; and not a solitary fairy-cup has been found by any goodwife for years in all these parts. Oberon must surely have lingered

too long, and been transfixed by a sunbeam.

The ghost-world, however, although not by any means so active as formerly, is yet by no means thoroughly depopulated. Stray wanderers come occasionally out of the weltering deeps of time to startle humble rustics with unaccountable knockings, and take liberties with their crockery. Footsteps have been heard, when nothing human was astir, ascending and descending worn-out staircases, and pacing, with heavy tread, deserted rooms. Doors have been known to be seized with sudden irritation, and to bang themselves to of their own accord. Household utensils have become suddenly possessed, and have shifted their quarters without authority or license. The churn has been known to contemplate a runaway match with the tongs; and the egg-dish has betrayed a ruinous affection for the frying-pan. Shovels and kettles have been seized with a sudden frenzy; while plates and cups innumerable have committed suicide in a single night, by springing from their respective shelves to the floor with a loud crash. It is scarcely three years ago since the inhabitants of Orton, a village in Westmoreland, were startled out of their propriety by this unseemly insubordination among the "potsherds of the earth." Not only at night, when the family ought to have been slumbering, but in the face of day, and, according to the local newspapers, in the presence of numerous spectators, the tongs and the shovel set a bad example to the rest of their fraternity, by reeling off, in a drunken sort

of way, from their place by the fire, in a waddling expedition of discovery round the kitchen, peering into corners, and prying into secrets of family economy, in a very reprehensible and undutiful manner; while the whole tribe of kettles and pans were flying about in all directions, without any

visible hand to originate or control their eccentric evolutions.

Such cases as these, however, represent only the facetious side of ghost life-parallel cases to which may be found recorded by Calmet, in his "Phantom World," and by Mrs. Crowe, in her "Night-side of Nature." There is a more appalling aspect under which these denizens of darkness present themselves to the mind of the innocent and the unsuspecting, terrible as any held up to view in the older revelations of Gervase of Tilbury, or Bekker in his "World Bewitched." It must be admitted that there is a certain family likeness among ghosts, however widely separated may be the localities which they may favour with their visits; nevertheless, as there are certain complexional peculiarities which serve to fix the identity of each separate member of any given family, and to distinguish him from all the rest of his brethren, so also among these august, and seldom-seen personages, there are certain characteristics and shades of difference, slight though they be, which serve to point out the localities to which they belong. We propose to give one or two specimens from our "North Countree," copying, as faithfully as we are able,

the portraits drawn by the native rustic limners themselves.

Egton Hall stands on the north-western shore of the beautiful bay of Morecombe. It is surrounded on three sides by woods of considerable magnitude; on the fourth side is the sea. The house was formerly one of those country seats of the second-class gentry, once so common throughout England. Like most other mansions of the same antique class, it has been occupied for generations as a farm-house. nothing remarkable in its appearance, except that air of dilapidated gentility which many such places wear. Its situation is secluded and romantic in the extreme. After ascending a woody acclivity, it first breaks upon your view, and with it comes a rare burst of inland and marine scenery; the waters of Morecombe Bay, studded with white sails, with its undulating shores sprinkled with hamlets and cottages, nestling among their native woods, from whose thick masses of verdure they peep out smilingly, and appear to be the home and abiding place of peace and rural comfort. Who would imagine that such spots as these could be made the resort of all stray wanderers from the realm of night? And yet such is indisputably the fact! Crowded streets, and the haunts of bustling commerce do not agree with the temperament and constitution of the inhabitants of the invisible world. They must have country air and freebreathing room—and who can blame their taste?

At the period of which we write, Egton Hall had been "haunted" from time immemorial. Throughout the month of November in every year, the occupants had to make up their minds to annoyances of the most exquisite description. The mystery was, in some way or other, connected with a certain old tree, that stood in a small field or "paddock," which lay at a short distance from the venerable mansion. What was the nature of the catastrophe that had brought on this fearful visitation, not even that most sapient of all sages, the "oldest inhabitant," could venture to decide; but the fact was stubborn and self-evident that some

fearful tragedy must have been enacted beneath its wide-spreading branches, or in its immediate vicinity, and that the hall was haunted in

consequence.

On one occasion a party of young men, four or five in number, were returning after midnight from a periodical fair held at the neighbouring town. They had to pass the hall on their journey homewards: and, as they were in a state of high exhilaration with their various adventures at the fair, and were, moreover, several in company, they burst out simultaneously, just as they were passing an old barn, half in terror and half in defiance, with a scream expressive of their contempt and derision for the spirit of the place. They had scarcely ceased, when their cries were responded to by a low and plaintive wail, which gradually increased in power and volume until a succession of the most terrific shrieks broke upon the ear. For a moment they stood as if they were petrified. Horror rooted them to the spot, until, starting away, they ran as fast as their legs could carry them, pursued by a reiteration of screeches, the intense agony of which could never be forgotten; and, when, at the distance of upwards of a mile, they paused to gather breath, the dismal sounds were still audible, echoing among the woods, and rising high above the sullen sughs of the wind. From that time forward, not one of the party was ever known to pass that way again, either alone or in company, after nightfall!

A figure resembling that of a female had frequently been dimly seen beneath the old tree, rocking to and fro, in a distracted sort of way, in the moonlight. As no one had ever ventured to approach it, all descriptions of its person were necessarily vague and unsatisfactory. It had often been seen pressing something to its breast. It might be a child. None could tell. And one innocent-minded farmer, who entertained a very especial antipathy to the inhabitants of any other world than his own, was often heard to declare that the figure had beckoned him towards it; but this only added wings to the terror with which he sped away

from its dreaded presence.

Lights were seen moving about the house, when it was well known that all the inmates were fast asleep in their beds. Noises and knockings were heard that could not be accounted for. Gliding footsteps passed from room to room. Sometimes there was a sudden bustle, and then a hush as sudden. There was a sound as if articles of furniture were being moved about, followed by a silence for the rest of the night, which was broken only by the distant noise of ceaseless rocking in the hall. This was the most mysterious affair of all, for throughout the month of November, wake when they might, at whatever hour of the night, the same rocking noise was heard, accompanied by a low strain of plaintive but inarticulate music. On the first night of that fated month, the old spectral heir-loom of the house made its appearance in the shape of an ancient high-backed rocking-chair. It came always at the same hour, and always took the same place at the same side of the deserted hearth, where it continued rocking without intermission until the morning, when it disappeared. It was there again on the succeeding night precisely at the same time, and went through precisely the same round of strange and unaccountable duties, until the end of the month, when it vanished altogether until the following year!

As may readily be imagined, these extraordinary and extramundane appearances and disturbances rendered the house anything but a desirable residence for a peaceable and well-disposed family. The premises became frequently untenanted for long intervals. The farmers found it impossible to keep their servants; and the supernatural terrors that hovered about the place overbalanced all the natural advantages of the farm, which was in reality a very good one. The consequence was, that the rent fell ruinously lower and lower, and still there were few who were ready to risk their peace of mind for the sake of filling their granaries and their pockets. Egton Hall stood decidedly at a discount among the farmers of Lonsdale North.

There was one, however, who was found bold enough to take it with all its fearful risks and hazards, provided always that these arose only from the invisible world, and did not in any way affect the world that now is. Farmer Simpson was a man of iron nerves. He was, as he himself expressed it, "born and bred amang t' Furness Fells, and he warn't to be freetened out on a good bargain by a fashment o' daft noises that did naebody eather good or harm." Still it must not be concluded that he was superior to the superstitions of his country; quite the reverse; he was as liable to the "soft impeachment" as anybody; but with him this was a matter of interest with which speculative belief or private opinion had nothing whatever to do. On the one side was an excellent farm at a ruinously low rent; on the other, were some shapeless horrors which he could not comprehend. The advantages were positive tangibilities; the disadvantages were only possible contingencies, which, at the worst, did not in the least affect the price of grain. How then could he, a practical man, hesitate for a moment? He was keen in the acquisition of wealth, yet he was by no means niggardly in spending it. With him the possession of money or money's worth was the greatest good-the want of money the greatest evil. In his hands, therefore, the whole affair became quite a commonplace business transaction. Credit—full barns and full pockets. Debit—a few knockings and mysterious noises. Any one might see on which side the balance would be struck.

Accordingly Farmer Simpson entered into possession of Egton Farm. At first everything went on prosperously. The seasons were fine, and the crops were heavy. There were strong probabilities of an excellent and abundant harvest. These were solid advantages, compared with which the prospect of a few annoyances during the ensuing winter was but as dust in the balance. Indeed, amid the sunshine and beauty with which the whole of the landscape was clothed during the summer months, it was hard to realise, even in imagination, the terrors which might overshadow it at a more unpropitious season. Everything around spoke of present comfort and of future profit, and there was nothing whatever to remind the possessor of the volcanic horrors that slumbered beneath. Harvest time came: the barns were well stocked, and the cup of prosperity seemed

to be filled to the brim.

This, however, was not destined to last long without interruption. The days gradually dwindled in length, and the long nights came with their shadows. The first of November arrived at last. It fell on a Sunday. On that day the family occupied the old hall, which was closed on every other day of the week except when it was thrown open to honour

some special occasion. The day set in with such a storm of wind and rain that the inhabitants were unable to go to church. This continued without any intermission or abatement, and at night it had increased in The family, after retiring to rest at the usual time, were suddenly startled by a shriek, so loud as to alarm the whole household, and which apparently proceeded from the hall which they had so recently left. This was soon accounted for by the appearance of one of the servants, who came floundering up the stairs in a state of indescribable terror, and with a face as pale as death. Some time passed before he could articulate so as to be understood; and, when at length he found his voice, he said, that having occasion to return to the kitchen for something that he had left, and hearing a rocking noise in the hall when he knew that the family were all up-stairs, he ventured to push the door open and look in to see what was going forward. There it was-the spectral chairblack, grim, and unaccountable! rocking violently in its old place by the side of the hearth, although it was evident that no one was sitting on it! The shriek had come from him.

On hearing this, Richard, the farmer, accompanied by his wife, and followed by the whole household, huddling together in heaps, descended to the hall; and on entering it, there it was, sure enough, rocking time to a low tune that sounded like a phantom lullaby, and wearing a certain weird-like, conscious look, that was sufficient to strike terror to the stoutest heart! When they first entered the room, the back of the chair was turned towards them; but while they stood at the door in speechless astonishment, the music suddenly ceased, the rocking stopped, and the chair slowly turned so as to face them all, when the tune and the rocking immediately recommenced with increased violence. It formed a singular and striking picture, this, as with the lights of the candles reflected strongly upon their horror-struck countenances, the group at the door continued to occupy their position, while the old chair confronted them all, as if it defied them to invade its territory, while it nodded and rocked until it fairly reeled again, as if its very existence depended upon the violence of its demonstrations. There was something ghastly and unearthly in its appearance. "It looked for a' t' warld," as Richard Simpson said, "as if it kenned summut as wo'd mak a man's yar (hair) stand on his head, like bristles on a pig's back, if it nobbut kenned how to tell it." He was more particularly struck with this peculiarity, when, on turning round, he found that he was alone in the apartment, all the rest of the family having crept off to their respective rooms. Noiselessly he stole to the door, which he locked on the outside; and for the rest of that month at least the haunted hall was avoided.

A short time after this occurrence, the farmer stayed longer than usual at the market. The prices had been remarkably good, and so was the company at the Farmer's Arms. When he mounted his horse to go home, he well knew that it was long after the time at which his family retired to rest, and he had still some two or three miles to ride. This, however, did not trouble him much, as on all such occasions he carried the key of the front door in his pocket. When he got clear of the town and into the open country, he found that the night was so dark that it was impossible for him even to see the hedges at the sides of the road. Not a solitary light was to be distinguished anywhere to cheer him on his

The rural population of the cottages and hamlets that were scattered about in the darkness had all been in their beds for hours. The faithful beast he rode, however, knew every turning of the road much better than its master, and the farmer proceeded on his way without meeting with any accident. On turning a corner of the wood near his own house, what was his surprise to find a strong light burning steadily at the window of one of the upper chambers. Something unusual had occurred! Some one must be ill. But no! There was a perfect silence throughout the house. It must be his wife, waiting up to give him a conjugal lecture on his late hours and intemperate habits. He would give her a bit of a surprise in her turn. After taking his horse to the stable, at some distance, he stole round noiselessly to the front, and, stooping down, picked up a few small pebbles, which he discharged full at the window where the light was burning. The curtains were slowly withdrawn; and a strong light burning underneath, revealed a countenance that sickened and sobered him in a moment! Oh! the horror and woe of those penetrating eyes—the anguish and despair of those livid and distorted features!

Richard kept what he had seen entirely to himself. He had heard that the apparition had never before revealed itself in bodily form within the house. Nothing had been seen but the grim, old, high-backed chair. He consulted with his friends as to whether or not anything could be done to relieve the hall of these disturbances, and lay the unhappy spirit. They were all unanimous, however, that no attempts of the kind were advisable, both from the nature of the case itself, and because of the ill success which had attended similar experiments that had been made on more than one occasion previously. They all agreed that the troubled spirit would be sure to "bide its time." If anything extraordinary had occurred, if there had been any marked departure from its ordinary line of proceeding, he might rest satisfied that time was now nearly expired. Without telling them what had really happened, Richard took this comfort to his heart.

Time wore on; and, with the exception of the rocking in the haunted room, nothing more was either seen or heard of the Ghost of Egton Hall. Christmas arrived; and amid its jovial doings and hilarities, the inmates almost forgot the annoyances to which they had previously been subjected. Spring followed; then summer. The barns and granaries were once more filled; and the farmer's profits were unprecedented. But as autumn began gradually to decay into winter, the servants, one by one, left their employment. They were not at all disposed to undergo a second campaign among the shadows of the invisible world. They solemnly declared that flesh and blood could not stand it! So they left their master to get on as well as he could with strange servants, whom he hired from a distance.

The period of trial was rapidly drawing nigh. Ample preparations were made for its arrival in the shape of some extra, and hearty-looking ale-barrels. The farmer had a lurking suspicion which he communicated to nobody, but which lighted up his countenance with hope and confidence, that, as he had seen the spectre face to face—a thing which nobody else had ever pretended to have done—they should be troubled with its presence no longer.

The fire blazed brightly on the kitchen hearth. The table was loaded with provisions and huge jugs of ale. It was the night of the first of November. The party assembled around the table consisted only of the farmer, his wife, and the farm-servants. They had determined to sit up until the hour-ten o'clock-when the spectral-chair made its periodical appearance. Supper being ended, the ale-jugs were once more replenished, and merry tales and laughter made the whole house uproarious. At last the clock, which stood near the hall-door-which, on this occasion, was locked—struck the hour of nine. It was noticed that from this moment the tales became less merry, and the laughter less loud and hearty. Conversation flagged. There were frequent intervals of silence, during which the loud ticking of the clock, which stood in such immediate and unconscious proximity to the scene of danger, might be distinctly heard. The farmer made vigorous, but unsuccessful attempts to revive the merriment and careless hilarity of the night. The comic stories that were told wore a very tragical aspect: the laughter, everybody knew, was forced. At length the farmer, growing impatient, started up, and taking a candle, went into the passage to look at the clock. He returned, and with the words-"Five minutes to ten"-upon his lips, sat down again in silence. The clock gave warning. The hour struck! Precisely as the last stroke of the hammer was dying away, they heard the lock in the hall-door turn, the door itself open, and close again. Then, high over the wail of the wind, which came up fresh from the sea, rose the sad, low chant, and the rocking of the phantom-chair commenced again for another season! The party broke up; and in less than another hour nothing was heard in Egton Hall but the ticking of the clock at the foot of the stairs, the indescribable tune, and the unceasing rocking in the hall, all of which, it is needless to say, continued throughout the night.

The door of the haunted room lay in the way of those who had to pass on to the upper chambers. The servants made a practice of finishing all the work that took them out of doors before night set in; and they all went up-stairs from the kitchens in a body. On one occasion, however, one of the men, happening to be out later than usual, observed a strong light issuing from the windows of the hall. Struck with this circumstance, he ventured to approach and peep through a window. The monotonous tone, and the still more monotonous rocking were going on as usual. There was the same black, high-backed chair; but, horror of horrors, it was no longer unoccupied! A spectral female figure, holding a phantom child in her arms, was rocking violently to and fro, and the eyes of both,

dim and hollow, were fixed firmly upon him!

This event, which soon got abroad among the rest of the servants, in conjunction with another occurrence which happened almost immediately after, produced a change in the domestic arrangements at the hall. The household had all been in bed about an hour. One of the men, who was still awake, heard the sound of approaching footsteps ascending the stairs. At first, they were light, and were accompanied by a rustling noise, like that made by female garments. A strong light shone through the instertices of the door, and on the footsteps reaching the landing opposite his chamber, he had the courage to apply his eye to the key-

hole and look out. What were his horror and amazement on seeing, directly opposite to him, the female and the child already described, while both appeared to be fully conscious of his intrusive watching, for the eyes of both were directed towards the hole through which he peered. The forms passed on; and immediately a stamping noise commenced, which increased in loudness till the whole house rang again. The terrified inmates drew their bed-clothes over their ears in the hope of shutting out the sounds, but this was altogether unavailing, as the noise increased in violence until the rooms thundered and shook. At last the farmer, in a fit of desperation, threw open the door of his chamber, and, coming out upon the stairs, demanded, in the name of Heaven, why they were thus disturbed, and with whom the disturbance originated. At the first sound of his voice, the thundering noise overhead ceased, and his appeal was answered, first, by a low scream; and, then, amid a silence, in which the plashing of the waters of the sea-occasioned by large masses of sand which the tide had previously undermined, descending into its depthsmight be distinctly heard, there was a plunge upon the bannisters above, then another-something shot past the farmer where he stood-and then there was a fearful crash in the hall below. The child had been precipitated from the top of the high stairs to the bottom! Then there was a still heavier plunge from above, followed by a still more fearful crash in the hall, and succeeded by groans of superhuman agony that thrilled through the hearts of all who heard them. After this not a single servant could be prevailed upon to spend another night in the house. They all lodged in the cottages that were scattered round about, and returned to their work in the morning. But night after night the same fearful scenes were enacted. There was the same low scream, the same heavy plunge, the same crash in the hall, followed by the same deep, and heartappalling groans!

This was the last appearance of the Ghost of Egton Hall. Henceforth its reign of terror was terminated. Whether this happy and triumphant consummation was to be attributed to the courage of the farmer in venturing to address the troubled spirit, under circumstances of such heavy and appalling terror, or whether it was owing to the fact that the period of its fearful probation was already about to expire, could never be very distinctly ascertained; but the fact was certain, that Richard Simpson continued to enjoy for many years—as he had taken the lands on a long lease—all the advantages of an excellent farm, at a very low rental, without being subjected to any of those annoyances and disturbances which had perplexed and marred all the labours of his more

timid predecessors.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

IV.

The equinoctial gales had lasted with unabated violence for some few days past, and the following night set in gusty and stormy. Nicholas Flamel sat at a heavy, oaken table, occupying one corner of his office, which, in spite of the vast dimensions of the chimney, was spacious and lofty, and but imperfectly lighted by a heavy iron lamp at his elbow. An inkhorn, and some few loose skins of parchment, lay immediately within reach; but the most conspicuous object was the manuscript on which he was employed. The copy beside it, in simple Gothic characters, was evidently the work of some tyro. There was no show of ornament, no gold or azure letters, the capitals being simply marked in red ink; but that under Flamel's hand had a richer and fairer semblance. The volume was the celebrated "Romance of the Rose," by Jean de Melun, or de Meun, whose intricate allegory renders this metrical tale, high in repute as it was then held, very tedious to the modern antiquarian reader.

Whilst Nicholas was intent on the golden and snow-white rose which he was causing to blow within the azure tracery of the majestic R, destined to begin the chapter and verse, Margot and his mother were plying the spinning wheel within the ample recess of the fireless chimney; for fuel was dear, and the night, though boisterous, was not cold. Their dark vestments blended with the shade wherein they sat, and they were nearly lost in its obscurity, whilst, ever and anon, the wind came howling down the huge cavity, drowning the burr of the spinning wheels, and the sigh that occasionally accompanied it.

The silence was only broken by a casual exclamation from the old woman, and the creaking of the vane as the storm doubled in intensity. The passing footsteps of chance pedestrians, and even the hoarse cries of the night watch, and the clatter of their horses' hoofs, were drowned in the gust. The bells of St. Jacques had just ceased tolling the eighth hour, a late one in those days, and the wind replied with a fresh blast that silenced their dying vibrations, when a loud knocking at the housedoor made the little party start with alarm.

"Nicholas!" exclaimed both females at once.

"Who can it be at this time of night?" said the young man, with obvious uneasiness. "What can they want with us?"

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"Some thieves prowling about, who don't fear the guet on such a

night as this," suggested the terrified Margot.

The knocking, which had been discontinued for awhile, as if the unwelcome visitor were waiting to see his summons attended to, was now renewed with energy, causing all within the chamber to turn pale.

"I must go and see who it is," said Nicholas, seizing his lamp; "it may be some poor wayfarer in distress, or a hurried message from a

friend."

" Jesu-Maria !- is the boy mad ?- I command you to stay," cried the

mother, as she saw her son about to leave the room.

With accustomed obedience he retraced his steps; the knocking had ceased, and a slight lull permitted them to ascertain that all was silent without. The pause, however, lasted but just sufficiently to allow them to imagine that the summons would not be repeated, when still more peremptory blows fell in rapid succession on the door.

The trembling women looked disconsolately at each other, and into Flamel's anxious countenance; for nothing good could rationally be expected from so late a visitor in those precarious times. Nicholas again seized the light which he had just put down, but in a more resolute

manner than before.

"Mother," he said, firmly, "I must go—you and Margot keep within the chimney—luckily there is no fire, and whatever you see or hear, remain there until I call you, or you are assured that there is no occasion for concealment. Nay, mother, seek not to detain me—do as I bid you, and

let those without be who they may, you will be safe."

The young man was in the passage as he spoke the last words, and advancing to the house door, withdrew the bars and bolts slowly and cautiously, in order to allow the women time to comply with his injunctions; but delay as he would, the last chain fell, the door revolved on its hinges, and lucky was it that he screened the light with his hand, for there rushed in a gust of wind that had nearly extinguished it. The next instant a figure of no common height, closely enwrapped in a hooded cloak, stood within the passage.

" Make all fast as before," said the stranger, in tones too imperative to

admit of hesitation.

With reluctant hands Flamel obeyed, easting the whilst a few looks askance at his strange visitor, whom by no effort of recollection could he remember to have seen before. But scarcely had he achieved his task than he repented his mechanical compliance with the orders of one who had no right to issue them, and probably had no good motives in so doing.

The stranger perceived his doubts.

"Never fear," he said, "I am a late comer, it is true, but I am here to do you good, not harm," and he thrust forth from the folds of his ample cloak a long purse, with gold pieces glittering through the knitted* tissue.

[•] We find in Lenoir that a bishop of the tenth century, whose tomb was desecrated in the stormy days of the revolution, had a pair of silk knitted gloves upon his hands.

"They say you do not lack sagacity—cannot you distinguish at a

glance between a client and a wild student or a footpad?"

Nicholas's misgivings were by no means allayed either by the sight of the gold, or by the words of the intruder, kind perhaps in meaning, but delivered in a contemptuous tone that vibrated unpleasantly on his ear.

"Forward, and show the way," continued the stranger, authoritatively, and Nicholas, rendered passive by surprise and irresolution, turned

into his office.

As the unwonted visitor's spurred heel resounded on the stone floor, and the dignity of his form in motion became apparent, all more vulgar terrors gave way in Nicholas's breast to the awe inspired in those days by

the presence of those exalted in station.

Silently and respectfully presenting a stool to his mysterious guest, he managed in so doing to glide behind him, and, by a hasty sign, warned his mother and cousin to lie *perdue* within their retreat. The stranger, after casting a few searching glances around, asked, with a slight show of distrust,

"Are we alone?"

"There is no man here besides ourselves," was the prompt reply.

"Then, if alone, why such churlish reluctance to obey my call?" per-

sisted the still suspicious client.

"The hour was late—no one ever comes here of an evening in the way of business, and I could not tell on so tempestuous a night who might be demanding admission," said Nicholas, apologetically.

"I understand—you were afraid—that is like a poor spiritless scrivener of Paris! It is a pity the pen is so indispensable a tool, the

sword is the only one that befits a man."

As this was spoken much in the way of a soliloquy, the youth saw no necessity for a reply. Pushing away the "Romance of the Rose," he drew an unsoiled skin of parchment towards him, prepared his pen, and even ventured to trim his lamp, confident that the additional light would not reveal his mother and cousin, and that, should such an event take place,

it would be unattended with any serious consequences.

"Now, Sir Scrivener," said his strange client, muffling himself with even more care than before, so that nothing of his face was visible but the eyes, glittering with menacing meaning from beneath the shade of the hood; "before I open myself to you, let it be under no mistake. Is your name Nicholas Flamel? Have you had dealings with Canches, the Jew? Do you know a changer called Blanchard? Tell me nothing but the truth, and the bare truth. Beware how you seek to deceive me!"

Flamel having satisfactorily answered these questions, for his heart began to beat with incipient ambition as the possibility of mighty patronage dimly floated across his fancy, the haughty stranger continued:

"Write, then, in clerkly phrase, and make it as binding as you think a cautious fox of a Jew will require it to be, an engagement by which but down with the preliminaries first, I will tell you the rest afterwards."

"Very well, my lord," said Nicholas; "but may I not make bold to ask, who are the high and mighty contracting parties?"

"High and mighty, indeed!" was the disdainful reply. "Write the

Jew Canches of the one part-you know the hound's names and attri-

butes, I doubt not."

"I have often, it is true, drawn up writings for him," said Flamel, leisurely, beginning to pen the formula then in use for such documents as that now required at his hand; but suddenly recollecting that not many months back a fierce edict had again banished the persecuted race from the realm, under pain of death, he hesitated, and turned pale. For if Canches, like some few other Jews, was yet lingering about Paris in concealment, not only would all transactions with him be illegal, but even criminal, and expose all parties concerned to great jeopardy.

"Why do you pause?" said the stranger-" have you not understood

me ?"

Nicholas humbly bowed his head in silent acquiescence; and whilst his pen slowly traced the formal letters, the keen eyes of the stranger roamed about the room, and seemed to question the dark shadows of its corners. The consciousness of this made Nicholas nervous, and though he attempted once or twice to divert his client's attention, and bring it back to himself by a few timid inquiries, they were received in a manner that made him cautious how he again ventured, unnecessarily, to address him. Still, even whilst his hand seemed diligent in the performance of its task, his glance followed the stranger's every movement. An unguarded motion of the arm, extended to reach the manuscript of the Rose, for one short moment revealed the under garb; but no sooner had this untimely chance disclosed his secret, than with the rapidity of thought he gathered the ample folds of the coarse, heavy mantle closely around him, and his lowering look fell on the young scrivener's shrinking form.

The pen had well nigh dropped from the trembling hand of the latter, and his heart stood still, for he had discovered in that transient glimpse the white robe of the Temple beneath the dark horseman's cloak. Perspiration stood in visible drops on his brow as he encountered the flashing eye of his visitor; and a thousand confused fears caused a passing film to obscure his sight; but, recovering himself almost instantly, he turned with renewed application to his task, assuming as great an appearance of unconcern as it was in his power to command.

"What ails you, Sir Scrivener?" said the stranger, sternly. "Why looked you so scared but now? Have you not yet done?—what have

you been about?"

"The Jew's name is down, messire," said Nicholas, endeavouring to speak with an assured tone of voice, and yet it was barely audible; "but those of the remaining parties?"

"Ah! true. Write, then, Almeric d'Aulnoy and the Knights his

friends."

"Knights of --- ?" muttered Flamel, inquiringly.

"Knights, and nothing more. By my patron, St. Bernard! I believe

the base-born churl would question the metal of my spurs!"

The slight rustle of Nicholas's pen as it glided over the vellum was the only reply; nor when the few words were written did he speak again, but by his attitude alone intimated that he was ready to proceed.

"Now, state the terms. The Jew Canches binds himself, most

solemnly, to teach this Knight, and the Knights, his friends, the art of making gold, for the consideration of certain sums to be paid beforehand towards the accomplishment of the 'great work,' and again during its progress, and of a princely reward upon its final and complete success. . ."

The stranger had proceeded thus far, in loud, clear accents, with the enumeration of the different clauses he wished to have inserted in this extraordinary instrument, when the young scribe, unmindful of everything but the horror with which this startling preamble filled him, and retaining nothing before his eyes but the unutterable dread of finding himself thus suddenly involved in the fearful secrets of a fearful Order, rose from his seat, and with faltering steps made for the door.

"Whither art thou going, dolt?" exclaimed the knight, angrily. Back, I say—back to thy task, or I will make thee rue thy causeless

terror!"

"My lord," said Nicholas, summoning up all his courage to face his fearful visitor — "my lord, I throw myself upon your mercy. That which you demand I cannot do. You have gold wherewith to bribe poorer and bolder men than myself—spare me, for the love of Our

Lady!"

"Now, by that same Lady, I'll make thee finish what thou hast begun! Thinkest thou, fool, I had not heard all about thee ere I came here? Canches said thou wert timid, but trustworthy and intelligent; but thou showest thyself the merest craven that ever said an Ave backwards in his fright. Come, write on, I say, or I will find means to punish thy insolence!"

As the stranger rose and strode towards him, Nicholas perceived Margot struggling to keep Dame Flamel from bursting into the room; and, obeying impulse rather than thought, he almost imperceptibly motioned the females back, and again entreated the knight, in moving terms, to spare him so great a sin.

"By the mother that bore you—by the cross you wear, I implore!"

he passionately urged.

"By what!—what didst thou say?" exclaimed the stranger in thundering accents, that silenced the storm without, and awed every soul within. "Ha! thou knowest me then? Well, behold me without disguise—look at me well, scrivener, that thou mayest know me again in due time and place, and report every lineament correctly—that is, shouldst thou live to do so."

His cloak fell as he spoke, and a Knight Templar, in the simple but imposing habit of his order, stood before Flamel. He was in the prime of life, with features of singular regularity stamped with the expression of reckless daring, which is said to have been the characteristic of this

warlike community.

Nicholas drew back a few paces, waiting the issue with paling cheek and perplexed brow. His terror was not only of the individual—the very word Templar had a magic in it to rouse the fears of the simple burghers of Paris, whose superstition, encouraged by the jealous clergy, led them to believe these knights leagued with the evil one in the East, whilst they knew by experience their somewhat wilful display of power in the West. As the knight gazed on the undersized youth, whose humble

rank in life deprived him of the right of using arms even had he possessed them, his look lost something of its fierceness, and he said, in less

angry tones than before:

"You now know who and what I am. My hidden purposes, part of which I would fain, for your own sake, have kept from you, are revealed. The die is cast for both of us. I see the Jew has deceived me; or, perhaps he was himself deceived—he thought you had a stronger heart. But we cannot now recede. You have my secret—I cannot afford to trust others with it, therefore with you it must rest. Come, write out the deed as I direct. Compulsion, you know, does away with all sin, and I take this, if it be one, upon my own conscience. Force me to no deed of violence, I am impetuous, and may not be thwarted; but serve me well and trustily, and your reward shall be doled out with no niggard hand."

Nicholas and his family were entirely at the mercy of a man who apparently obeyed but the dictates of his own fiery passions, whose very presence there at that hour, and the purpose of his visit, proved him careless alike of the laws of his community and those of his country. Flamel, therefore, young as he was, acted as much in compliance with the suggestions of prudence as of fear, when, silently approaching the table and resuming his seat, he again took up the pen, nor did he lay it down until the instrument was ready. As he slowly traced the concluding words, and the date of the year, a sudden pang shot across his brain. Might not the Templar attempt to place his fatal secret beyond mortal knowledge by destroying the innocent tool which his ignorance had forced him to employ on a matter of such vital importance? A slight shudder thrilled through his frame at the possible horrors of the scene that might ensue the moment he reported his task done.

Commending his soul to Heaven, and devoutly crossing himself, he presented, in silence, the deed to the knight, who, after taking a few hasty turns through the room, had resumed his place, watching, with eager eyes, the apparently capricious evolutions of the pen, and following its course with a naïve delight which seemed to calm his ruffled humour. But the instant Nicholas looked up, his former sternness returned to lip

and brow.

"Finished?" he exclaimed. "By St. Bernard you have wasted time enough to take a fort in concocting a few miserable lines! However, it done—read it."

With an unsteady voice Nicholas obeyed. When he came to the words, "and the Knights, his friends," he paused, and, without raising

his eyes, observed, "I have left blank for the names."

"That is useless," said the Templar, hastily—"mine will do. It is enough that one be in danger, without involving more. I will take all responsibilities, liabilities, and so forth, upon myself, whether with Canches or others."

He did not speak again until, the document being read through, nothing remained but to add the signature. In times when the caligraphic art was chiefly confined to the priest, the student, and scrivener, but was, for the most part, perfectly unknown to the redoubted body of the chivalry, the seal was the well-imagined substitute for an impossible

feat—that of affixing the executor's name to deeds whose validity it was an object to ensure. In earlier times, a representation of the individual's face or person, and his name engraved around it; later, the animals or signs he had chosen for distinctive marks upon his shield or banner, were the impress by which he represented himself; and hence the derivation of the modern seal, whose real use as a badge of distinction is now so rapidly declining.

The Templar accordingly drew forth a large iron seal, of triangular form, and gazed at it thoughtfully, whilst Nicholas melted the necessary quantity of yellowish mixture, half bees'-wax and half turpentine, into the customary mould, and suspended it to the deed by a few long strips of parchment. This unavoidable delay seemed to irritate the

knight.

"Finish at once, Sir Scrivener," he exclaimed; "you need not be over-nice—I am but too condescending to grant such a surpassing bold

request as this vile Jew's, and a folly may be repented of."

There was something confidential in the manner in which this was said that encouraged Flamel to look up; something there was of regret and hesitation in the young knight that made him wish he had the courage to speak a few bold words; but the deed was folded and conveyed to his vest ere Nicholas had well bethought himself of what he desired to say, and his dreaded visitor again stood before him with an aspect so dark and overcast, that his momentary interest in him faded from his

breast, and left it once more a prey to overwhelming fear.

"Swear upon the cross eternal silence as to this night's transaction," said the Templar; "many in my situation would be tempted to secure the silence I demand; but I am not of these—I shall rest satisfied with thine oath, confident that, for thine own sake, thou wilt not break it. For wert thou luckless enough to whisper the doings of this night, not one avenger only would rise up to strike thee; flight over land or sea would be of no avail, for wherever a red cross stands there must thou fall! Thou knowest thine own peril now—thou art forewarned," and striding towards the chimney to seize the crucifix which hung beside it, the Templar's eyes suddenly lighted upon the figures shrinking within its gloom.

"Treachery, by St. Bernard!" exclaimed the young knight, throwing himself in an attitude of defence, and whirling his drawn sword in flashing circles above his head, but the next instant his arm fell passive by his side, for the terrified females sprang, shrieking, into the room. Margot, the first to recover herself, addressed the Templar in deprecating tones; but instead of answering, he fixed his eyes, from which all anger had fled, on her countenance in admiring surprise. Margot's cheek and brow were suffused with crimson under the intensity of that gaze, and

the words she would have further spoken died on her lips.

"Is this your sister, or your wife?" said the knight to Flamel, still staring with a soldier's rude, untutored homage at the beautiful girl.

"And that old beldame-what may she be?"

"My mother and orphan cousin," murmured Nicholas, fresh fears rising in his mind, as he saw gross admiration mingled with suspicion stamped on every line of his uncertain visitor's countenance. "An un-

foreseen chance left them witness to what has passed this evening, but I

will answer for their discretion with my life."

"An unforeseen chance, sayest thou?" retorted the knight, scornfully; then changing his manner as his eyes turned from the ashy-palemother to the blushing young girl. "You thought of hiding them from the thieves your foolish fears conjured up at my knocking—perhaps this may be the truth, for how could you have known of my coming? But why not show themselves and retire in time, or why didst thou affirm we were alone?"

"I said no man was present," muttered Nicholas, meekly.

"And darest thou quibble with me, and place the honour of a knight and thine own worthless life in the keeping of two babbling women?"

Nicholas looked abashed; but Margot filled up the pause, following

upon a question which none knew how to answer.

"His life is dear to us," she said, raising her pleading eyes to the Templar's frowning visage. "We would rather perish than bring him to harm."

"Spoken bravely, my pretty maiden, and, by my faith, thou art the boldest of the party, as well thou mayst be; and what says you old crow?"

But Dame Flamel, whose passions were fast rising, and who felt the imprudence of giving way to them at such a moment, remained obdu-

rately silent.

"My aunt is hard of hearing, so please you, my lord," Margot continued; for, with womanly quickness, she had perceived how much more acceptable her mediation was likely to prove than that of any one present; "but my cousin, Nicholas Flamel, is her only son—our only support. It is he that earns our bread—without him we were utterly destitute! Oh, my lord!" she continued, as, instead of the storm she dreaded to conjure up by her frankness, she saw evident indications of a softened mood in her listener—"oh, my lord! have some compassion on a poor family who can never have offended you—you have this evening brought enough of affliction upon us—do not increase it by your severity. As to secrecy, the safety of all alike is too deeply involved to allow of indiscretion—trust me, Sir Knight, and depart in peace."

"Thou hast a fair mistress to help thee at a pinch," said the Templar, turning with a good-humoured smile to Nicholas, who stood transfixed with amazement at his cousin's appeal. "I wish I might command such a pleader at my need. For the present, then, the matter rests thus: I would do none of you harm—I am even sorry matters have proceeded so far; but regrets come too late. Mark this, however, and trust me it is no idle threat—there are those mixed up with this business that are more ruthless than myself, and whose path it were certain death to cross. If you speak, you will not have to dread me, but them. So now, good night, good people all, especially you, fair maiden, and may no evil result

to you from this wild prank of ours."

So saying, the Templar, resuming hood and cloak, made with slow strides for the passage, where pausing a moment, whilst Nicholas was undoing the fastenings of the outer door, he turned to gaze again at Margot; then passing rapidly into the gloom, was lost to sight. The returning footsteps of Nicholas, and shortly after the clattering of the horses of the guet, roused the females from the stupor into which they had fallen. All three stared disconsolately at each other for some time without speaking; when Nicholas sat down at his usual place, and burying his face in his hands, became plunged in deep meditation. Dame Flamel sank upon a stool by his side, and was the first to break this oppressive silence.

"This is what I call being born to misfortune," she said, in the plaintive tone of one utterly hopeless. "Ay, not only born to, but bowed down by it. Oh, my son! my son! Where shall we hide our heads from

the coming storm?"

"Why," said Flamel, suddenly looking up; "if we can but manage to keep our own counsel—nay, better to consider this whole affair but as a nightmare—forget it as we would forget a dream, then all may yet be well; but the Templar is right—I was mad to leave you there! Had you but been away, then all might have been as though we had never met."

"And you would have kept that mighty sin all heavy on your own conscience?" said the indignant mother. "If the Jew can make gold, then he is a wicked sorcerer in league with the Evil One, and you have signed a treaty that may deliver over many a Christian soul to eternal perdition! Oh, Nicholas! it is not your poor perishable body alone, but your precious soul that is in danger—think of that!"

"I apprehend no real evil from the Templar," said Margot, thoughtfully. "From the very first, I felt inclined to think that he rather meant to frighten you into compliance with his desires than to harm you—had you boldly resisted he would not have pushed matters so far."

"Faith, I know not," responded young Flamel, with a dubious smile. "When one feels the boar's tusk at one's throat, one does not pause to

inquire how his humour may stand."

"And yet," continued Margot, "there was in this young knight's every look something frank and open that spoke not the cowardly assassin, although I grant his tone was that of command. But much of his anger was put on. When your eyes were off him, I saw his expression soften more than once."

"Yet, if common report may be credited, the Templars are not to be trusted," said Nicholas, "especially," and he again glanced anxiously at Margot, "where women or gold are at stake. Thrice dolt—idiot that I was not to get you off!—just the bait to bring back that sort of customer."

"From which the sweet Virgin and all the martyrs shield us!" exclaimed Dame Flamel, piously crossing herself. "No worse accident can befal us in a temporal or spiritual way. But now that they have found you out they'll murder you before my own eyes, or make you write for them all the wickedness they please to think."

There was so much probability in the suggestion that the young man's

colour went and came at the bare thought.

"Well, if there be evil attending all this, there may also be good," said Margot, gathering up the gold coins left by the knight on the table in payment for the scrivener's trouble.

"Good!" said the old woman, hastily snatching the money from Margot, and keeping it tightly clutched in her own grasp. "Good

never comes of evil, and it is not these few pieces that can pay us for the risk to life and limb which we are like to encounter in an affair that is none of ours. No, no, it is a bad business take it at what end you will, and likely to bring us to the Grand Châtelet one day or other, if not to worse. Magic, and Jews, and Templars, all to fall at once on a poor, innocent, unsuspecting family! Had your father been the man instead of you, Nicholas—ah! then it would have turned out very differently—he would not have made so much as a stroke of the pen at such a behest. But he was a man of prudence—of sagacity—of conscience. Ah, me! that ever I lost my good man, and oh, Nicholas! that you should be so little like him!"

"I feel I might, perhaps, have done better," said Nicholas, despondingly; "but what is the use of reverting to the past? we must rather

think of the future."

"To-morrow, then, as soon as ever the church-doors are open, you must go and crave absolution," said the mother.

"I do not know," answered Nicholas, gravely shaking his head,

"whether I should like to trust this secret even to the confessor."

"And the sin, my son-the sin! Would you let it sit heavy on your

heart for the rest of your days?"

"Why," said Nicholas, hesitatingly, "beyond the mere fact of transgressing every rule of an Order of which I, thank God, am no member, I do not see what crime either this strange knight or myself have rendered ourselves guilty of."

"He does not see!" whined out Dame Flamel, in dolorous accents. "He does not know, after all my Christianly teaching, my lessons, my example; and he living so near the church that it is no trouble in the

world to step over!"

"And the gold," said Margot, innocently; "my cousin had better,

perhaps, offer it up at some shrine in expiation."

"No—no," hastily interrupted the dame; "that he has a right to—he has earned it dear enough—but, Nicholas, touching the necessity of confession, you see, in case of further difficulties, it might be a means of procuring a friend, advice, and, above all, it would set my own soul at rest."

"We'll see—we'll see," answered the youth, with a wearied look; "the agitations of this night, which may, perchance, be but too soon renewed, require that we should recruit our strength. Peradventure, it would have been all the better for us had some prowling thief come our way, instead of that hair-brained Templar. However, God's will be done."

Still Dame Flamel would not give up the point. She could not rest, she said, until her mind was made easy about her son's confession; nor was she content with insisting upon that alone, but, every now and then broke out into fresh misgiving about the future, and lamentations concerning the manner in which a peaceful, honest family had, from one hour to the next, been dragged forth from their safe obscurity, to be thrust upon Heaven alone knew what desperate courses, enveloped in God alone could tell what dangerous, lawless mysteries.

These remarks were but too well grounded not to find an echo in poor Nicholas's heart. A dark presentiment of evil sank into his soul. He felt as if the hand of Fate had that night seized on him and his, to whirl them upon, perhaps crush them under her mighty wheel; and yet his scared imagination could hardly clothe his fears in distinct forms. He looked from his beautiful cousin to his aged, care-worn mother, with a miserable feeling of his utter inability to protect, his want of discretion Advice was certainly the thing most needful; but where to guide them. could he apply for it consistently with prudence. The confessional was the only place where such a secret might be whispered with any degree of safety; and yet, despite its sacredness, Nicholas doubted the expediency of that measure. Had his old friend and teacher still lived, then, indeed, had he been secure of sound counsel and inviolable secrecy—he could have opened his whole heart without reserve. But where was he now to turn for a friend? He felt, for the first time, how much his extreme youth and inexperience were against him in his position as head of a family, responsible as he was to God and to himself for the right management of the helpless beings depending upon him, to one of whom, too, he was bound by so sacred a tie.

Whilst lost in these ruminations, he hardly heard the complaints of his mother. It was well nigh dawn when the troubled group sought repose. As Margot approached to wish her cousin good night, which sounded like mockery at that hour, and under such circumstances, she slightly hesitated, and paused as though she had something more to say but could not bring herself to utter it; and Dame Flamel had already passed the

threshold ere she found courage to inquire,

"And the knight's name, cousin?-surely you remember it?"

"Almeric d'Aulnoy," replied Nicholas, carelessly; and Margot hurried

from the room as if afraid to be detained a single instant.

"What could her motive be for asking?" was Flamel's next thought, which led to another, and that to another, until sleep became impossible. The expiring lamp reminded him that it was time to open the shutters,

and lo! it was broad day without.

At that hour they were generally assembled at the morning meal, sweetened at least by peace and hope, if not by actual happiness. But this day not a foot was stirring, and Flamel's eye-lids felt heavy, and burning from the effects of his unpleasant night watch. True such things were not unknown to him, nor was anxiety, in its more ordinary acceptation, a stranger; but now, when not only the cares but the perils of life seemed in reality thickening around him, he felt the burden heavy. The paly gold of the sun rising behind a watery veil attracted his gaze for a few moments—" and yet," he muttered, half unconsciously, as he looked forth from his casement on its brightening surface—" is it really possible for man to rob nature of her secrets, and if so, is it lawful?"

AN ENGLISH HERO.

Do you know, dear reader, now, there are days when we cannot bear How we creep out of it into shaded chambers, and lock the sunshine. our guardian doors against intruders. The mind, as well as the body, has its seasons of illness. Hours, when the jar and fret of the passions chafe and heat us, and the only tangible sudorific is solitude and silence. At such times life itself is one great irritability, and the whole human race rings hollow and out of harmony-yet all the while (if we would but analyse it), the evil dwells solely in ourselves. How then to exorcise this dark spirit which ever visits us in different phases? We can subdue and modulate it by the means I have already described, yet after all, we do but lay a sleeping giant. It must be wrestled with in solitude—it must be read, thought, argued down. Its greatest champion is prayer, but, alas! so perverse is it in its moods, that it is generally when we most need it that the heart turns away impatiently from religion. For myself, being often afflicted after this fashion, I have to spare my self-vanity, set it down to the score of "organisation," and when I have been unable otherwise to master it, have put myself stubbornly and resolutely to write it off. There is such a world before us of touching incidents and home-truths, so much of love, tenderness, and beauty, that presents itself to our imaginations, that we would fain make ours the tender traits we are surrounded with, and shadow forth, however imperfectly, some of the gleams of truth and light which fall amidst our darkness like sunset flecks interpenetrating every-

And now I must lead you far off to one of our Indian cities. atmosphere is rich and glowing, and the British flag waves proudly from the turrets. For all that, the grim spectres of Death and Famine have stalked amidst its streets, and on the sleeping plain the Indian chiefs are keeping wild carousal; for the watch has sped where hunger has set his seal, and already they anticipate starving out the enemy when the British fortress will capitulate at discretion. They have even grown lenient in their anticipated victory, and have already allowed free egress to the old men, women, and children. As the city gates opened before sunset, this little troop issued through—a mere handful of the helpless and infirm of those from whom even famine had turned aside in pity. silence as they cross the plain entering within the enemy's camp! the English garrison stand armed upon the ramparts ready to fire a volley upon the Indians should any signs of treachery meet their sight. None such, however, is apparent; they are seen winding onwards beyond the disputed ground, and even their numbers can be counted in the pure light of these tropical skies. Why is Clarence Mowbray absent from his post? The Indian night has settled upon the city, and men are taking by turns their rest in sleep! but to-night Clarence is sole watcher—a sentinel at the bed of death. Let us seek him out there for I cannot better introduce you to him than in such a scene. The verandahs are placed open,

and soldiers (for there are no others left in the garrison), keep plying the incessant Punkah. Mosquitoes and fire-flies are buzzing without the gauze screens; yet even 'mid this time of drought and famine, rough kind hands have placed by the dying one, grateful fruits and little delicacies.

We are surprised to see a woman's form amongst the pillows, and close beside her, sleeping sweetly, like Innocence in the arms of War, her infant baby, born but a few days into the world. Clarence is bending over her, listening to her faint half-uttered words as they flow towards him like the expiring waters of a cistern. She is the wife of their commander, struck dead by a ball while on duty on the ramparts. He had been her very life and stay; she had followed him from luxurious England in all her youth and beauty, and had bivouacked with him amidst the wild Indian prairies, in the dark forest jungles, and on the great hills rearing up giant fronts forward to Heaven. His presence had been strength and life to her; she had so entwined herself with him, that she knew no separate existence; and now, when the hour of her strong agony approached—when she clung the more closely to him in all that helplessness that so well befits the loving woman, he had been taken

from her in the discharge of his duty.

Like snow wreath on the mountain-brow, so glided she from his bosom, struck downwards by the blow, and ever since that fatal moment her life had dissolved away from her, like a vapour of smoke that goeth forth, and is no more seen. There was a welcoming smile to his infant as it was brought and laid on her bosom, but a wild light of joy in the eyes when the doctor warned her she was even now "passing away." She had discharged her women, for she could not bear, she said, to prevent their deliverance, and so she sent for Clarence Mowbray, who had always been his friend, and, with all a woman's faith and confidence, entrusted to him the care of her infant. "I am dying, Clarence, but I die happy, for I have seen him in my dreams, and he tells me he is waiting for me. You will take charge of the child, his child, and you will not leave these walls until you have given me Christian burial. I trust all to you, for I know that you loved him, and I am sure you will stay with me, even unto the end. Now, place my baby gently on my bosom, and do not leave me, for my eyes are heavy, and I shall sleep better when thus guarded."

There was a sweet smile on her lips as he complied with her request, and soon she fell off into a calm and unbroken repose. But Clarence had sat by many death-beds, and he knew well that she would never wake more on earth. He watched the breath of life as it rose at first, parting gently her lips, and then it grew fainter and fainter, and there was a kind of half sigh; but, as he bent his ear to listen, there rose no breath to follow it. He himself closed her eyelids, and smoothed back the rich profusion of her hair, then, raising her gently, he wrapped her husband's cloak around her, and, so giving her baby to one of the soldiers, strolled

back mournfully and dreamily to the party at the ramparts.

The day was hardly yet risen, but he found them already discussing a sally for the ensuing night through the Indian camp. Inflamed by spirituous liquors, and certain of success, these men now kept idle watch, and it struck the English that, when they were laid bound in their drunken sleep, they might come upon them, like a thief in the night, and

so pass, unmolested, through their ranks. At any rate, it was worth the trial; and all through the following day there was fitting on of armour, righting of steeds, and putting in order, for none knew whether or no

there would shine down upon them the light of another sun.

It was again the sunset hour, and the little band of warriors in the city remained in readiness, only the last sad services for the dead were still to be performed, and for this gentle shadow of their gallant commander a soldier's funeral could not be inappropriate. A simple grave in the moonlit chapel-her husband's cloak still her fitting shroud, and tears wrung forth from hard men moistening the soil-what more could they yield her, whose life had been as an Indian summer, and whose enfranchised spirit was even now hovering above them? Shadows have fallen over the city—the little band are armed and assembled—the horses are led out—the lights have long been extinguished in the enemy's camp, and now they are only waiting for Clarence to lead them forward. has been feeding the baby with the few bread-crumbs and water that are left in the city, and now, having hushed her to sleep in his arms, he has wrapped his scarf around her, and so is kneeling down, whilst one of the rough common soldiers fastens it tenderly, yet firmly, across his chest; and so, with his precious burden secured against his heart, and an inward prayer to the searcher of souls, he descends to the city gates, mounts his impatient charger, and takes his place as leader of the band.

The utmost caution is necessary. Should a horse neigh, or the armour ring, it may cause discovery. What if the babe should awaken and cry? At a slow foot march, and creeping in the shadow of the city walls, they advance stealthily across the plain—now they near the tents—at a given signal every man dismounts, leading his horse carefully and noiselessly through the sleeping guard. The sentinels are stretched out, drunken, on their posts-heavy sleep has fallen on their soldiers-and, keeping still in the shade, they pass, at last, undiscovered through the boundary, and find themselves standing on the ground beyond. They are, indeed, saved! God had laid the baby in a blessed sleep. All through that suspense of danger, when discovery had been death, and even Clarence's brave heart had beat thick and fast, the baby's breath had come to him, fanning his cheeks like an angel's wing, and an inward whisper of his heart had told him that it is not through our deeds of mercy that God forwards destruc-

They are, indeed, saved!

At a signal from Clarence each man leaps joyfully on his horse, which bounds beneath him as though revelling in new liberty, and away they go, with the wings of freedom and the lightness of new life, a mighty rush across the sweeping plain. The noise has roused the Indians. are lights flickering in the camp, hasty saddling of horses, spurring of steeds, and balls that fly past them, hissing on the midnight; but a stronger hand is over all, scattering them abroad, and, at last, wearied and disgusted, they return again to their forsaken camp-ground and their

empty city.

When Clarence arrived at the English encampment he was so exhausted that he had to be carried, fainting, from his horse; but his pledge to the dying mother had, indeed, been nobly kept, and no one could look on the gallant hero, with the helpless infant still sleeping calmly beside him, without acknowledging that Mighty hand which had guided them through their flight, and which tempers even the east wind unto the shorn lamb.

It is many years since the scenes I have been describing to you. Clarence Mowbray has married a fair English wife, and noble boys and sweet gentle girls are clustering around his knees. But the baby, whose life he so gallantly preserved, has grown up amongst them the eldest daughter of the household. The young wife worships her husband in her—the little children hang round with embraces—and Clarence himself has ever a kindly word and happy smile with which to greet her. But there is a shadow in her dark eyes, for she thinks of her mother's lonely grave in the Indian city; of her father shot down at his post on the ramparts; and, much as she loves Clarence's wife, and his dear little ones, she bears a feeling towards Clarence himself that is almost akin to devotion in its qualities of love, faith, gratitude, and memory.

KING EDWARD THE MARTYR.

A LEGEND OF CORFE CASTLE, DORSETSHIRE.

Why doth King Edward shun the chase?

The stag is sprung—the eve is fine;
Is it his brother's home invites,
Or visions of the rubied wine?
Or fairer hope, or fonder dream,
That thus his lonely path he wends,
Unconscious where the country breaks,
Or where the deepening copsewood ends.

What shade has crossed the monarch's brow?
O'er Wareham's golden woods are cast
A mantle of autumnal dyes.
In the rich sunset, fading fast,
The fir with bare red limbs uprears
Her sylvan crown of richest green;
The fern is dressed in evening's tears,
And the dark shadow sleeps between.

Why doth King Edward slack his rein?
What dark foreboding sense of ill,
Like mists upon a desert plain,
Has turned his bosom's warmth to chill?
Was that the screech-owl's warning voice
Came mingled with the coming night?
No, fair Elfrida bends the knee,
And humbly prays him to alight.

"The eve is spent, the night draws on,
Oh! enter at my lowly gate:
Would that your loyal town of Corfe,
Held nobler cheer or lordlier state.

Yet all Elfrida's force commands
Of fealty or of power be thine;
She gives thee thus the kiss of peace,
And prays thee pledge her in the wine."

Forward the gallant Edward bent,
The beker to his lips he bore,
Instant the dastard blow was dealt,
And England's monarch rose no more.
Th' affrighted charger cleared the ground,
With bloody nostril, quivering flanks,
And Edward's body dragged the dust
Through Corfe's degraded vassal ranks.

Little Elfrida's heart was moved,
She sees her Ethelred a king.
Oh! that ambition for the loved
Should take the form of serpent's sting!
Hidden within a hovel near,
The royal corpse in rags she dresses—
Sackcloth upon the lordly limbs,
And blood amid the fair bright tresses.

Night came, deep gatherings in of gloom,
Like blackness sown upon the air,
The stillness of the silent tomb
Lacking the atmosphere of prayer!
For her no crescent moon uprose,
No holy star her nightwatch kept,
Vengeance and blood have called aloud
On Him who never failed or slept.

A rush, as though of myriad wings,
A blaze of dazzling light,
And she who never saw the sun
Looks forth into the night.
Dark shadows on Corfe's traitor ground
Have filled the soul with fear,
And pale Elfrida, taking flight,
Has sought her house at Bere.

Trembling on Wareham's burghers fell
Horror, remorse, and dread,
With priest, with chalice, and with bell,
They march to meet the dead.
Fire, like a pillar from the sky,
Directs them on their way,
Where, as a martyr in his shroud,
The murdered Edward lay.

With solemn chant and voice of prayer,
A gathering cloud of gloom,
With alms, with fastings, and with tears,
They bear him to the tomb.
St. Mary's Church receives the corpse
Within its hallowed bound;
Sadness and silence rests upon
Its consecrated ground.

Then rose good Alfer (Mercia's earl),
A faithful knight and brave:

"And meets it thus our king should rest
Within a lowly grave?
On bishops, abbots, lords, I call—
May Wilton's abbess aid—
The sister of our Edward dwells
Within her cloistered shade."

Quick came response—a nation's voice—
"To Shaftson's Abbey bear:
Her holy altar shall receive
Our martyred monarch there.
The Church ordains a solemn day
That all her sons attend;
And incense, prayer, and sacrifice,
Shall consecrate the end."

Swept that procession through the land—
Gatherings from fiefdoms came—
For the great earls' and barons' power
Upheld our Edward's name.
E'en pale Elfrida, mute with dread,
Her weeds about her cast,
And bid her charger to the door,
To join them as they passed.

With solemn tread and mournful chant—
A melancholy throng—
With sprinkled ashes, naked feet,
They bear our king along.
Only Elfrida's horse fell back
In fear and mortal dread,
Trembling, though every sinew still,
It dared not meet the dead!

Then blasted was that iron heart,
Shattered that pride of will;
Earth—it was yawning at her feet,
Heaven—it was open still!
So, dressed in pilgrim's holy weeds,
And with a bitter cry,
She entered at the convent door,
And let the world go by.

Now ancient legends tell the tale
Of penitentiary powers,
That turned this sinner to a saint,
And soothed her dying hours.
And still through Corfe and Purbeck's range
These old traditions lay,
Like sunshine on the ancient hills,
Of memories passed away.

THE BROKEN VOW.

ONE of the most lovely spots on the banks of Killarney is the well of St. Clare. Supplied by a clear and limpid spring, you can in spite of its depth count every pebble at the bottom. Independent of the delightful situation, the well, or rather the little chapel which covers it, is well worthy of admiration. Some pious devotee had reared it in times long gone by, and though the days were passed when any one cared to keep it in repair, nature seemed to claim the place as a favourite one, and decking it with mosses and wild flowers, made it perhaps still more picturesque than it had originally been.

The graceful Osmunda waved its feathery branches round the tiny stream which, meandering towards the lake, abounded with strange and rare plants; whilst the crimson-berried arbutus enhanced the beauty of

the scene by its glittering evergreen foliage.

One soft calm summer evening, some sixty years ago, there stood by the side of this fairy well, pretty Katie Dawson, the fairest maid in all the country round. Her short petticoat and blue boddice set off to advantage her handsome figure, while her feet and ancles were not the less bewitching for being unadorned with shoes or stockings. As she stood leaning against the corner of the well, her pitcher placed on a stone hard by, with her snow-white stomacher confined by a narrow band around her neck, the short but rather open sleeve displaying the fair and rounded arm; her hair hanging in careless waves, and her lustrous eyes shaded by long black eyelashes, she formed a picture to enchant every beholder, but such a one as we are seldom privileged to see, except from the pencil of some imaginative artist.

By her side stood a tall, handsome soldier, who held one of her hands

in his.

"Then, Katie, dear, promise once more that you will wait for me. I am going to-morrow, Katie; I am going to Spain, and I shall be away a long, long time; but we are both young, and I hope some day to come back to you; so swear, Katie, that you will be true to me, as I to you."

And there, by the side of the ruined well, they swore by St. Clare to be true to one another. Sad was their parting, and bitter the tears that were shed, and Katie thought her heart must burst as she caught a last look from Patrick Moran as he disappeared among the trees.

Time passed on and months flew by, but no tidings reached Katie of her absent lover. She watched every ship, questioned every soldier, in the hopes of hearing some news of Patrick, but, alas! her Ave Maria's

and her petitions to St. Clare, remained unanswered.

To most minds, time and absence combined, weaken affection, so we must not blame Katie as being singular, if after three or four years she began to feel it possible she might love another, or that when a suitor presented himself in the person of a handsome English sailor, she should listen to his advances with a fluttering heart. Now, Katie had parents, kinsfolk, and friends, who were Roman Catholics, while William Prouse was a Protestant; they had long persuaded her to forget Patrick, but were strongly opposed to her wedding a Protestant and a stranger. Katie, however, was determined (a little opposition is apt to make young ladies

so) and William was in love, and so they persevered; but heavy were the curses launched against their devoted heads, when one morning Katie and her lover where nowhere to be found, and deep and bitter were the

vows of vengeance from her enraged kinsmen.

About a month after their disappearance, Katie, happy in her husband's love, took possession of her English home. It was a small freehold farm belonging to Prouse, situated in one of the wildest and most picturesque parts of Devon. It stood scarce a mile from the cliffs, which here rise to the height of five or six hundred feet, but was sheltered from the tremendous westerly gales, which so often sweep over that part of England, and carry destruction and death to so many vessels and their crews.

Katie's beauty, her soft winning ways, the romance attached to her, soon made her queen of many hearts, and a favourite with all. Prouse gave up his seafaring life, and seldom troubled himself at all about ships or the treacherous deep, unless some friend engaged in the "Fair trade" wanted his assistance, or one of the frequent wrecks upon the coast gave

employment to his strong arm.

Happy as only a woman who loves and is beloved Katie was happy. can be. And if you had looked on her, with her husband seated by her side, his arms thrown round her, one little one nestling in her bosom, the elder ones playing at her feet, you would have thought no happiness on earth could have surpassed hers. And perhaps such was the case, but in every cup, however sweet, there is a bitter drop; in every spring, however clear, some earthy morsels are mixed up. Katie's thoughts would sometimes wander back to her native land, and when she became a mother, she felt what it must be to lose a darling child, for such she had been to the mother she now never saw or heard of. Remorse, too, would sometimes arise at having forsaken the religion of her forefathers, and though she often joined in public worship with her neighbours in the splendid old church on the cliff, still she felt a trembling dread of misfortune coming on her and those she loved, as a punishment for her fancied transgressions, and in fulfilment of the curses she had heard pronounced against her husband and herself.

Again: her broken troth, her violated oath would rise before her, and she would shed bitter tears at the remembrance of the parting at St.

Clare's Well.

However, more happiness fell to her lot than falls to most, she was ever ready to help a poor neighbour, and having prospered in this world's goods she shared them with her friends. Thus things went on for ten or twelve years, and Katie from a beautiful girl had become, if possible, a still more lovely matron, still retaining her graceful figure, which had ever been remarkable.

"'Twill be wild weather at sea to-night, Katie," said her husband, as he drew his chair closer into the ingle, and took one of the children on his knee. "I shouldn't wonder but what there was a wreck somewhere on the coast to-night. There's been a large barque beating about all day, trying to make the channel, but I have my doubts as to her reaching it all safe."

"Oh, husband!" said his wife, shuddering; "don't say so, let us hope they will escape, poor fellows, or if they must be wrecked, God send them here that they may have a chance of escape, instead of being butchered as those poor Spaniards were the other day at ———. Why is it, William, that men are changed to fiends sometimes, and able to do such deeds of blood?"

"'Tis covetousness, my Katie, covetousness that does it; but, hark! what was that!" he exclaimed, as he sprung on his feet, and laid his hand on his wife's shoulder.

The dull boom of a gun as it came to them, half smothered by the violence of the storm, left no doubt that some ship, in all probability the one William had just spoken of, was in distress and not far distant.

William was soon equipped for an excursion to the rocks, and sallying forth, he alarmed the inhabitants of a few cottages that were near, and hurried forward on his errand of mercy.

Katie, after making some arrangements for the reception of any sufferers who might be brought to the farm, filled a basket with some brandy and other things likely to be useful, and wrapping herself in a large cloak, took her way towards the sea.

And a lonely way it is, that walk from Prouse's farm to the sea. The path runs along the bottom of a valley, wild as it can be, a rapid trout stream, occasionally broken by falls, and always rushing and tearing along over large mossy stones, finds its way on the left hand, while on the right rises a steep gorse-covered hill, a curious contrast to the opposite side of the valley, which is green with short fine grass. About half a mile from the farm, the path suddenly stops at the edge of a precipice, and the stream in its headlong course takes a clear leap over the smooth rock of full a hundred feet, and then surging and boiling after two or three minor falls, it finds its way to the ocean over the rough shingles of which the beach consists.

the hand of man cut a steep precipitous zig-zag path in the face of the cliff, this is now called a sand-path, and at certain states of the tide you may see dozens of wretched donkeys winding their weary way up and down, while their urchin drivers take a shorter cut by sliding down the rock. However, I cannot help fancying that the original design of the road was for no such lawful purpose as sand carrying, and for ought I know to the contrary, it may be a high road for the Fair Trade still.

As Kate came to the head of this path, the wind was so tremendous, that she could hardly stand, and it was fortunate for her that the wind was in-shore. It was with the greatest difficulty she managed to make her way down by clinging to the projecting stones and tufts of grass, and more than once, completely exhausted, she crept for shelter into some little nook. The night was truly awful. There was that strange light which seems to come from the sea itself in great storms, and the lightning occasionally presented the wild bay and the towering cliffs to the gazer's view for a moment. The shouts of the men sounding above the storm, and the lights passing hastily from one part of the beach to the other, encouraged Kate to proceed. That beach she so often visited in the calm summer weather, with her happy playful children, was now strewn with bits of wreck, the foam was flying like snow-flakes in the air, and wherever a corner afforded a place of shelter, was heaped up in deep drifts. Shortly after Kate reached the shore—her husband came to her for an instant.

"My darling wife, that's good of you to come, and I see you've brought some of your stores with you, but I don't believe one of the crew will be saved; unless I'm much mistaken, there's foul work about this wreck; there were those here before me who could not have reached this place by the time except they were on the look out."

Then placing her in a sheltered spot, he left her with a hearty blessing. Kate sat and wept; she thought how some of those on board might be husbands as dearly loved as her own good William. How others were precious sons, perhaps the only comfort and support of widowed mothers. Some one in that ill-fated vessel might, after long years of toil, be returning in hopes of clasping to his heart the woman he has loved and striven

for so long.

That last thought brought back the old misgivings about her oath to Patrick Moran, but her dreams were interrupted by the wild shouts of the men as they strove to reach the vessel, which was being gradually driven nearer and nearer the shore. Foremost in all danger was William Prouse; full a head taller than any of his companions, his strength and capabilities naturally led the others to regard him as their chief, while his well-known kindness made him so beloved, that all willingly

gave him the pre-eminence he took.

Kate's heart beat wildly, and she felt half suffocated with terror, when as the first faint streaks of dawn enabled those on shore to see more clearly the doomed ship; William, steadied by a rope bound round him, attempted to reach the vessel, to establish a communication with which was the only chance of escape, and this the only means of managing it. At length, after some suspense, a joyous cry announced that the end was attained, and after the lapse of a few moments they saw the intrepid Prouse fasten the rope to the vessel, but when following his directions they began to haul in the rope, they found to their horror it had been severed—maliciously, as was evident on examination. All hope of saving the crew by this means must now be abandoned as they were not possessed of another rope sufficient for the purpose, even could another person be found to undertake the perilous voyage, and great fears were entertained that Prouse would fall a victim to his intrepidity.

Kate's agony cannot be described, she wandered up and down half frantic; and when she saw William preparing to leave the wreck, bringing with him a man evidently a cripple, she wrapped her face in her cloak to stifle her screams. Meanwhile the spectators were deeply interested in the event. William was known to be a strong and powerful swimmer, and much might be hoped from his experience and unusual strength. Often had he sported amidst the waves in wild and boisterous weather, and been engaged in similar acts of mercy, and yet come safe to land. But this was an extraordinary storm, and he had hampered himself with a poor cripple. There was enough to demand his unimpeded strength for his own deliverance; it could scarcely be expected he should reach land with his burden. The lookers-on, however, many among whom were his warm friends, entertained hope, they watched anxiously and intently. Not a word was spoken among them. He was as yet in smooth water, the billows, indeed, were high, huge mountains of water, rising and falling, but they were as yet unbroken, and he breasted them bravely without loosening his hold on the man. But he was nearing the

breakers, white, angry, turbulent, with the strength and tyranny of giants. He is among them; they, the bearer and the borne, rise up to the white crest, and doubled up under it disappear from sight. Alas! they are gone! No! once more they rise, but nearer shore. Onwards they come, but separated; they will be dashed in pieces—who can stand the force of that tremendous surge? It still advances, and the two help-less bodies are flung bleeding and senseless high upon the shore.

Poor Kate! surely that hour punished you enough for all your short comings. She sat with her husband's head pillowed on her lap, while his rough companions tried all their simple arts to revive him. Kate had taken off her cloak and wrapped it round the prostrate man, and as she sat there, with her wild black hair streaming in the wind, and her pale face turned towards the storm, she looked as though reason must

desert its throne.

"See! look! he lives! he moves!" said one of the men, after the lapse of nearly an hour, as he laid his hand kindly on Kate's. "Come you mustn't look so wisht, 'twill vex him." All her strange wild look fled away as looking down she saw the kind dear eyes looking at her, and heard her name gently murmured.

"Are any of those poor fellows saved?" inquired William.

"Alas! no," returned the man who knelt near him; "that ugly cut on your head has caused, I fear, the death of several, as well as very nearly sending you into the next world; for Black Evan has been busy while you've been lying here."

"The villain!" muttered Prouse, "he shall pay for it; but help me

to get up, and I will see if these poor fellows are really all gone."

However, when Prouse tried to stand, he would have fallen had he not been supported by those near, and it was with great difficulty they at length conveyed him up the steep and rugged path to his home, and his injuries had been so serious that he did not rise from his bed for many days.

As the party accompanying William had stopped in their upward way to rest awhile, they saw the gallant vessel urged forward by the tremendous swell, bound like a restive horse, and then with the roar of thunder, her wooden walls gave way, and nothing but the planks and spars borne hither and thither by the eddying tide, remained to tell that such a thing

had been.

Only three bodies were recovered, and these were conveyed to Prouse's farm, as being the nearest as well as the largest house in the neighbourhood. One of these was the cripple William had striven to save; he had lost one leg, and the scars on his body, as well as the old soldier's dress he wore, told he had been in the wars, and was probably returning to England in consequence of his being disabled. As Kate entered the room to pay some last kindnesses to those poor friendless beings, her attention was particularly directed to him as the person who had so nearly caused the death of her husband. She looked in his face, it came like a dream of other days before her, the shirt was torn and partly open, displaying a small iron chain. The blood rushed to her face. "Can it be he?" she murmured; then summoning courage, she drew the chain out; appended to it was an iron crucifix and a locket; she pressed the spring and saw a black curl and the initials "K. D." She could no longer

doubt. They were gifts she had given Patrick in long passed years. She sank on her knees by the bedside, and exclaiming wildly, "He was true to his God and to me!" sank lifeless on the floor.

William's first act with returning health was to use every exertion to bring the wreckers (whose agency in cutting the rope he could not doubt) to justice. They had of late so much increased in power and daring under the chieftainship of Black Evan, that the country rang with the accounts of their outrages, though no steps had hitherto been taken

to rid the coast of these scourges.

On this last occasion, however, one of the wreckers had been detected in the act of murdering a half-drowned seaman, who was unfortunately rescued too late from his inhuman assassin. Public attention was roused, and a little troop organised to capture, if possible, the head of this infernal band. Many of the country people were in league with them, and many were the fires they lighted and the false signals they exhibited to lure unwary voyagers to their inhospitable rocks, known locally by the name of "Shark's teeth," a name thoroughly descriptive of their craggy sharpness.

After any more daring infringement of the laws than usual, it was the custom of these marauders to disappear for a time from the immediate scene of their depredations. This was the case now; before any steps to secure them could be taken, all trace of their whereabouts was lost. Prouse, however, was not a man to be daunted quickly, and so with the authority of the magistrates the houses of all those suspected of having any fellowship with the wreckers were searched. Little of any value was discovered, but many things clearly implicating the cottagers with the band; but in some of his researches Prouse got a clue to their present retreat, and accordingly preparations were made for surprising them.

It was a goodly company that set out one winter morning in quest of Black Evan. First rode the squire, mounted on a short, thick-set, roan horse. He was a tall, handsome old man, who, though he had numbered near seventy years, still retained the splendid seat on horseback for which he had been famed in his younger days. By his side rode a brother magistrate, and near them a troup of young men of the upper class attracted by the prospect of a skirmish. Behind a mixed multitude of yeomen, farmers, and the retainers of the old squire, who kept up his establishment in the most approved old English style.

Prouse, in great excitement, was riding hither and thither on his stout old Devonshire pack-horse, now galloping forward to show the squire the way, now in the rear urging silence as they neared the supposed hiding-place, or giving hints as to the use of their weapons, and on their con-

duct to the more inexperienced of the party.

It was a dreary road they traversed. Gradually leaving the sea-coast and cultivation, they entered a tract of wild moorland, that few who have not seen could imagine to exist in England. Look which way you will, nothing but moor, bog, and sky meet the gaze, not a tree to break the dreary monotony, nothing living to be seen, save a few half-starved cattle and some wild ponies; no sound greets the ear but the harsh cry of the moor-bird, disturbed from its nest by the wanderer's footstep. On, on, miles on, through this dreary wilderness, and you come to a broad deep river—deep and sullen from its source, like an unloved and unhappy

childhood, ever dogged and mournful. The exquisite heath plants that abound in the higher ground, here disappear, and give place to tall thin reeds and flowering rushes, while the banks are, in the summer-time, bespangled with many coloured bog-plants and orchuses of every hue, from the deepest purple to the white sweet-scented satyrion—the wild orange flower of England.

On either side the river are low swampy meadows, abounding in dangerous bogs and pitfalls to entrap the unwary steps of any who, in their love of trout-fishing, may be induced to traverse this lonely desert. At a short distance, however, the country gradually swells into low hills

where firm footing may be obtained for man and beast.

It was to this wild place that Prouse guided the party, but to all appearance there was not hiding room for a child, let alone eight or ten men, and as was suspected a large amount of plunder, nothing in the

shape of a house was to be seen far or near.

"Well, I declare, these must be clever chaps you've brought us in search of Master Prouse, if they can find a hiding place here," said one of the young men. "I don't think anything bigger than a Pixie would attempt such a thing, and I fancy the little gentry would choose a prettier look out."

"I'm certain I've brought you to where I was directed," answered Prouse; but even he was a little staggered in his hopes of success, and half feared having been made a dupe, when on looking round with considerable care, he suddenly espied the recent impress of a man's foot upon the soft mud.

"Ha! what have we here?" said Will, elated at the discovery; "let

us see where this goes, I reckon our game is not far off."

He dismounted, and traced the footsteps to the very edge of the stream, when they turned suddenly along the left bank, which in this place over-

hangs the water, and is covered with a dense thicket.

"This is our path," said Prouse. "Here our gentlemen lie concealed; somewhere in these bushes we shall find Evan and his gang; but we must be sharp and wary, or they will escape us. Let two or three of the gentlemen remain upon their horses upon this bank, let some of the others cross to the opposite side; and I and some more of the men will creep along under the bank and see if we can rout out the vermin."

All the parties now took their places, and silence fell on the scene. The dark water, indeed, gave forth its solemn tones, gurgling unceasingly, and uttering sounds which, to the fanciful ear, are sometimes like the sweet music of bells—and now like human voices—a fish would now and then dart to the surface, after some unlucky insect, or a small bird gently alight and splash the water with its wings; but apart from these, all was silence, and these broke it not, for they were part of it. When, hark! a crash of boughs and uproar in the water—a wild shout, not unmingled with wilder curses. The wreckers had made a rush from their concealment, some were captured immediately, some broke through the invading circle and were hotly pursued. Black Evan was among the latter, and had flung himself at once into the water, intending to escape by the opposite bank, but one was close upon him who was quite equal to the capture. William was in the water almost as soon as himself—he gained upon him, and laid hold of his collar.

" Evan, give yourself up quietly. It may be better for you; it is of no use to struggle, both banks are lined with horsemen."

To his surprise, instead of resisting, Evan answered meekly,

"Well, I'll go! This is not kind of you, William, considering we were

friends as boys, but I'll go."

And then finding William off his guard, and his hold a little loosened, he suddenly sprung upon him like a tiger, and clasping him round the neck, endeavoured to pull him under. Then there was a desperate struggle between those two men. William was rather the stronger, but he was taken at a disadvantage, and Evan was fiercer, and determined to The water was up to their armpits, and they stood in the midst of the river, entwined in one another, and swaying to and fro, like interlaced trees in a tempest—now their feet gave way on the slippery stones, and they both rolled over in the water; now Evan is seen uppermost, his face black and furious with passion, and his elf locks streaming with the Happily he had no weapon, or William would in all probability never have risen agan. But at last he has contrived to rise, and now Evan is under, and by his superior strength, he is gradually getting the wrecker nearer shore. Another man comes to his assistance, and Black Evan, as well as several of his companions, is secured.

The elder magistrate, seeing the culprits captured, took the command, and ordered them to be fastened to the horses, while William and others should form a guard to prevent their escape. Great was the agitation in the village on their arrival. They were, however, safely confined in the hall that night, and the next day, accompanied by a strong escort, were

lodged in the county gaol.

As the history of Black Evan is really but an episode and separate from the main part of our story, we shall only add concerning him, that with some of his companions he was sent out of the country, while those not so deeply guilty suffered different terms of imprisonment, and though wrecking still occurred occasionally, we may hope that they being de-

prived of their leader, did not again join the diabolical trade.

To return to poor Kate. From that time forward she drooped and faded, in vain was all the kindness and attention shown her by her husband, nothing could rouse her from her gloom. None knew the cause, they fancied the terrors of that dreadful night had overpowered her, and hoped in time she would be her old self again, but she never rallied, ever the same peaceful gentle creature she had been; she step by step sank lower in her misery, till lovely Katie Prouse, the pride of the country, was a maniac. Then all she said was taken for the ravings of a diseased mind, but her talk was ever of her slighted religion and her broken vows.

She was so harmless and quiet in her madness, that she was left at

liberty to follow her own tastes and pursuits.

Not very far from Prouse's farm was one of those old picturesque wells so common in that country. It was prettily situated on the side of a hill, and the feathery osmunda waved there in almost as great profusion as To this sweet spot poor lost Katie on the banks of Killarney. most commonly took her way, and there would she sit all the long summer days adorning the rude building that covered the well with the sweetest flowers she could find, or rocking herself to and fro as she sat on a stone near by, sing for hours together the wild, sad lays of her ancient home. She would tell the passers-by how the holy St. Clare watched over the spring, and that it was to propitiate the saint that she ever took such care of her favourite fountain and never was even a leaf

suffered to pollute its waters if poor Kate was there.

Thus years rolled by, ever the same pensive creature, she never changed except when some wild storm beat on the shore. Then Katie took her position on the cliffs, and was ever the first to give warning of a vessel in danger. As she stood, the scarlet cloak she always wore streaming in the wind, and her long hair floating over her shoulders, singing in her wild, sweet voice, some of her favourite ditties, she looked like some fair sybil of old, but the young folks and children shunned her during such times, and would crouch away in dread of poor pixie-led Kate.

Twenty years passed thus, and Kate's raven locks were turned to grey, when one day she rambled out as usual. All belonging to her were so accustomed to her ways, that no notice was taken of her absence, till her time for return was long passed, and then her husband, who through all those long sorrowful years had shown her the love of a bridegroom, set out in search of her. He reached the well, but she was not there, though the still unfaded flowers showed she had adorned it that day with more than usual care, a lad passing told him he had seen Kate going towards the cliffs, and thither he bent his steps; he did not find her in any of her favourite haunts, and was becoming more and more alarmed, when he remembered that occasionally, but at long intervals, she had wandered to the beach. He descended the sand-path, but no where could he see her, and he was going to reascend the hill in despair, when a glimpse of the well-known red cloak, relieved for a moment his anxiety. He went towards it, and in the angle of the rock, the very spot he had placed her on the night of the wreck, lay his beloved wife, apparently asleep; he put his hand on her shoulder to awake her—but she was dead.

He sat down beside her stupified. Once a gleam of the setting sun resting on her cheek made him fancy her still alive, but another touch of

the cold hand, told him hope must be no more.

He lifted her up, reverently wound the old cloak round her, and laid her in his bosom. There, where she had loved to lie in life, he cradled her in death. He carried her home, she was a light weight to him, and he liked not any one else should touch her. He took her to their own room and laid her on her own bed, then sank in wild and speechless agony by her side. There she lay in all the strange mysterious loveliness which had ever distinguished her. She had never seemed to grow older, perhaps the childish thoughts which had so long been hers, had tended to retain the youthful and innocent expression.

There she lay, the being he had loved and tended, watched, and caressed, she could never speak to him more, never smile again upon him.

Oh! the agony of that hour!

They buried her in the church-yard on the cliff, and many were the mourners who gathered round her in death. But he, the strong man who had loved her so, lived but to see the favourite flowers he had planted on her grave bloom once, and he was laid beside her to part no more.

Years have passed away since then, and no kindly hand now tends the flowers once planted, but the story is remembered, and little children still point fearfully to poor mazed Katie's grave.

THE TWO CHRISTMAS EVES.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

IV.

WHAT a Christmas-day was spent by that unhappy group! The murderer—he who had so recklessly plunged those two devoted women into the suffering and despair, which no language can adequately portray; he alone, with the varying emotions of his dread malady, awoke from his trance-like slumber, as if unconscious of the recent events under which they still shudderingly thrilled and trembled; he alone, with characteristic apathy, and revolting indifference, could eat and drink, and make merry; he alone, as it were, could observe, with disgusting hilarity, the solemn festival of Christian faith; he alone could find the good things, which Lucy had brought with her, such as his soul really loved; and hour after hour he prolonged the nauseous feast, now and then singing a stanza of some obscene song, or relating a ribald jest; but then, thought the mother, with the palliating excuse of self-contrition, even while she would fain have closed her eyes and ears to such depraved debauchery-" He is not master of himself; he is in the tyrannic power of the demon of frenzy; God help him!" She, in fact, almost rejoiced with a morbid satisfaction that he could thus find, in such excess, a temporary alleviation from the inherent depression of a deranged and misguided reason; and she more than once reproved Lucy sharply for attempting to check the frantic excitement of his copious and solitary libations. Lucy said no more, she shut herself up with her own sad thoughts, shedding tears within her heart, as she recalled the Christmasday, now being passed at the vicarage, with its morning's sacred service—its evening's calm and quiet hospitality; and knew that there she would be spoken of, and her felicity enlarged upon-her felicity!

The day—the long, interminable, monotonous day—did at last wane into the gloom and stillness of night; the day, whose every instant had teemed with such alarm and anxiousness of suspense; the day, so full of shame, crime, agony, and inquietude, did at last come to an end, and the fond, fearful mother again resumed her place by the couch of her intoxicated son, to watch, and to hope, and to pray—pray that he might escape detection; hope that he would—believe that he would—for he was still before her, still out of a prison, still free and unfettered; and, guilty as she knew him to be in the eye of the law should his crime be discovered, he was acquitted by her heart, and therefore, with him, she could yet gladly and willingly live, for him she could yet struggle and toil, and feel it no privation to deny herself all for his dear sake. Only let him be spared to her, and how could she be sensible of sorrow, suffering, penury, or any one earthly ill; so heavy in less trials, so insupportable in

slighter visitations?

Two days after the perpetration of the murder, Stanley Wentworth stood in the felon's dock, before an inexorable judge, and impartial jury, to be tried for it.

He obstinately determined to defend himself, for, with the astuteness

which so wonderfully distinguishes the insane, he felt confident in pleading derangement he should escape the dreaded penalty of a public and ignominious death; and he had no conception then of the severer doom than the most appalling death could decree; there is in that slowly, lifedestroying, wearing, sickening torture of the perpetual, unmitigated, never-ending agony of the confinement, which only terminates with the grave. Calm and collected at first, then warming gradually, until his clear and lucid argument attained the culmination of intense eloquence; he was pleading for his life, and his anxiety to save it rendered his energy astounding-his reason, for the moment, triumphant. Nothing diverted him from his purpose; neither the loud and harrowing sobs of his mother and sister, nor the involuntary approbation of the entire court; on he went, pouring out of his beautiful mouth a torrent of sublime and affecting, almost convincing argument. But of a sudden he pauses with startling abruptness, his cheek blanches, his lip quivers, his hand extends menacingly—for, lo! his rival appears in the witness's box, he who caused the deed of blood, he who alone beheld it, he who alone can testify against him; still it was not that which occasioned his instant revulsion of feeling-it was the deadly hatred, the inveterate jealousy, which longed to add his blood to the blood of the victim already offered at the shrine of guilty passion.

The young man described the assassination of the unfortunate girl, with whom he had just become acquainted, with the most minute exactness; adding, that after the actual murderer had fled from the spot, he also crept from his temporary shelter in another room, and, with the instinctive love of self-preservation, gave no information respecting the atrocity, lest he should be implicated in it; and that, it was finally discovered by the letters of both, to the girl in question. This, then, was conclusive; this, then, was condemnatory. Then this fatal witness had to give way to another; and a poor old widow, supported by en elegantly dressed girl, tottered into his place; it was the mother of the criminal, who, on her oath, was summoned to declare if the plea of

insanity urged by the accused was valid or not.

A faint, tremulous murmur, slightly resembling the sounds of the human voice, arose on the hushed and absorbed attention of the excited and sympathising multitude; then, at the order to "speak louder," Mrs. Wentworth hurriedly and agonisingly detailed the whole of her miserable marriage career—all her father had predicted; all she had endured with her husband; all she had endured with her son; how, as he inherited madness from his father, so had he from his; how, even her daughter was not free from the awful taint; how she herself, from such an accumulation of misery, and the heavy sense of a dead father's displeasure, was well nigh mad also. "Would that I were, oh, God! would that I were! Spare my boy, my lord—spare my boy, gentlemen of the jury, for the Great Almighty above can only condemn the luckless being whom he deprived of the full power of judging right from wrong according to law as established on earth. Oh, my father! is thy spirit now appeased? Have I not suffered for my disobedience?"

After the most patient investigation into all the circumstances of the murder, the jury returned a verdict of guilty, with a strong recommen-

dation to the royal clemency; which was forthwith extended to the unhappy felon, in the shape of strict imprisonment in a lunatic asylum for life.

Mrs. Wentworth, unable to contend with this last more dire stroke of fate—the loss of daily seeing, or hoping to see, her beloved Stanley—sank under it, and, at the end of the month—the anticipated month—Lucy went back to Dorsetshire, now quite an orphan; now quite, quite friendless, save for the still tender compassion of the Spencers, who were yet too poor to offer her a permanent home, much as their kind, generous, and most attached hearts desired so to do.

V.

AGAIN is it Christmas-eve! The fine old, baronial mansion of the Earl of Strathbane, thrown open to the élite of the county, was thronged with noble and distinguished guests. Sculpture of the rarest excellence, pictures, each a priceless gem, mirrors, gold, satins, furniture of the costliest kind, ornaments of the most exquisite design, all, in fact, that money could purchase, or taste devise, was accumulated there in dazzling and oppressive profusion; the conservatory alone, with its choice exotics, its luscious fruits, its marble statues, its sparkling fountains, its tepid airs, and delicious aroma, was no despicable fortune; while the three spacious drawing-rooms, furnished, en suite, with oriental magnificence, and now glittering in the added gorgeousness of its countless lustres and chandeliers, presented a scene of brilliant and enchanting elegance, far surpassing the most vivid imagination of those who have never actually beheld the triumphant reality of that magical alchymy which, with wealth and taste combined, can transmute all to perfection that surrounds the favourites of fortune.

Lucy had been occupied the whole of the day in decorating the ball-room with graceful festoons of natural flowers, intermixed with blue and silver tissue of an inconceivably delicate and transparent texture, and which was admirably calculated to relieve the superb and recherché costumes of the aristocratic company, ere long destined to blend with it, to complete the beauty of the gay, glad, wondrous scene.

Lady Strathbane was so charmed with the whole arrangement, that, to testify her grateful admiration of Lucy's exertions to please and gratify her, she requested her acceptance of a splendid bracelet, with a hope

"that she would wear it at the ball."

"If you command me, madam, I dare not refuse; but if, as I suspect, from your invariable kindness, you only seek to confer pleasure, pray, pray excuse my declining to avail myself of the proffered attention; pray, pray permit me to consecrate this peculiar evening to a very solemn and a very serious remembrance, for it is the anniversary of a terrible epoch in my life."

"Dear Lucy, do as you choose; far be it from me to dictate to you in this or aught else, still, I can but think it a pity in one so young to encourage the memory which awakes useless sorrow and useless regret. Is it not rather a duty to struggle against so besetting, so poignant a reminiscence? Would I could see that fair face beaming in the genial smiles it should be radiant in, should be glowing in, at your age, Lucy!"

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which so wonderfully distinguishes the insane, he felt confident in pleading derangement he should escape the dreaded penalty of a public and ignominious death; and he had no conception then of the severer doom than the most appalling death could decree; there is in that slowly, lifedestroying, wearying, wearing, sickening torture of the perpetual, unmitigated, never-ending agony of the confinement, which only terminates with the grave. Calm and collected at first, then warming gradually, until his clear and lucid argument attained the culmination of intense eloquence; he was pleading for his life, and his anxiety to save it rendered his energy astounding-his reason, for the moment, triumphant. Nothing diverted him from his purpose; neither the loud and harrowing sobs of his mother and sister, nor the involuntary approbation of the entire court; on he went, pouring out of his beautiful mouth a torrent of sublime and affecting, almost convincing argument. But of a sudden he pauses with startling abruptness, his cheek blanches, his lip quivers, his hand extends menacingly—for, lo! his rival appears in the witness's box, he who caused the deed of blood, he who alone beheld it, he who alone can testify against him; still it was not that which occasioned his instant revulsion of feeling-it was the deadly hatred, the inveterate jealousy, which longed to add his blood to the blood of the victim already offered at the shrine of guilty passion.

The young man described the assassination of the unfortunate girl, with whom he had just become acquainted, with the most minute exactness; adding, that after the actual murderer had fled from the spot, he also crept from his temporary shelter in another room, and, with the instinctive love of self-preservation, gave no information respecting the atrocity, lest he should be implicated in it; and that, it was finally discovered by the letters of both, to the girl in question. This, then, was conclusive; this, then, was condemnatory. Then this fatal witness had to give way to another; and a poor old widow, supported by en elegantly dressed girl, tottered into his place; it was the mother of the criminal, who, on her oath, was summoned to declare if the plea of

insanity urged by the accused was valid or not.

A faint, tremulous murmur, slightly resembling the sounds of the human voice, arose on the hushed and absorbed attention of the excited and sympathising multitude; then, at the order to "speak louder," Mrs. Wentworth hurriedly and agonisingly detailed the whole of her miserable marriage career—all her father had predicted; all she had endured with her husband; all she had endured with her son; how, as he inherited madness from his father, so had he from his; how, even her daughter was not free from the awful taint; how she herself, from such an accumulation of misery, and the heavy sense of a dead father's displeasure, was well nigh mad also. "Would that I were, oh, God! would that I were! Spare my boy, my lord—spare my boy, gentlemen of the jury, for the Great Almighty above can only condemn the luckless being whom he deprived of the full power of judging right from wrong according to law as established on earth. Oh, my father! is thy spirit now appeased? Have I not suffered for my disobedience?"

After the most patient investigation into all the circumstances of the murder, the jury returned a verdict of guilty, with a strong recommen-

dation to the royal elemency; which was forthwith extended to the unhappy felon, in the shape of strict imprisonment in a lunatic asylum for life.

Mrs. Wentworth, unable to contend with this last more dire stroke of fate—the loss of daily seeing, or hoping to see, her beloved Stanley—sank under it, and, at the end of the month—the anticipated month—Lucy went back to Dorsetshire, now quite an orphan; now quite, quite friendless, save for the still tender compassion of the Spencers, who were yet too poor to offer her a permanent home, much as their kind, generous, and most attached hearts desired so to do.

V.

AGAIN is it Christmas-eve! The fine old, baronial mansion of the Earl of Strathbane, thrown open to the élite of the county, was thronged with noble and distinguished guests. Sculpture of the rarest excellence, pictures, each a priceless gem, mirrors, gold, satins, furniture of the costliest kind, ornaments of the most exquisite design, all, in fact, that money could purchase, or taste devise, was accumulated there in dazzling and oppressive profusion; the conservatory alone, with its choice exotics, its luscious fruits, its marble statues, its sparkling fountains, its tepid airs, and delicious aroma, was no despicable fortune; while the three spacious drawing-rooms, furnished, en suite, with oriental magnificence, and now glittering in the added gorgeousness of its countless lustres and chandeliers, presented a scene of brilliant and enchanting elegance, far surpassing the most vivid imagination of those who have never actually beheld the triumphant reality of that magical alchymy which, with wealth and taste combined, can transmute all to perfection that surrounds the favourites of fortune.

Lucy had been occupied the whole of the day in decorating the ball-room with graceful festoons of natural flowers, intermixed with blue and silver tissue of an inconceivably delicate and transparent texture, and which was admirably calculated to relieve the superb and recherché costumes of the aristocratic company, ere long destined to blend with it, to complete the beauty of the gay, glad, wondrous scene.

Lady Strathbane was so charmed with the whole arrangement, that, to testify her grateful admiration of Lucy's exertions to please and gratify her, she requested her acceptance of a splendid bracelet, with a hope

"that she would wear it at the ball."

"If you command me, madam, I dare not refuse; but if, as I suspect, from your invariable kindness, you only seek to confer pleasure, pray, pray excuse my declining to avail myself of the proffered attention; pray, pray permit me to consecrate this peculiar evening to a very solemn and a very serious remembrance, for it is the anniversary of a terrible epoch in my life."

"Dear Lucy, do as you choose; far be it from me to dictate to you in this or aught else, still, I can but think it a pity in one so young to encourage the memory which awakes useless sorrow and useless regret. Is it not rather a duty to struggle against so besetting, so poignant a reminiscence? Would I could see that fair face beaming in the genial smiles it should be radiant in, should be glowing in, at your age, Lucy!"

"Ah, madam! your sweet, amiable wish, your cordial condescension, causes my heart to shine in the light of that holier gratitude which would fade upon the lips—a light, the last imperishable ray that will illumine its dreariness this side the grave!"

"Lucy, you must not so despond; I must not suffer it to-night, then."
"Oh, madam! do not finish; to-night I must implore to remain alone
and unthought of; to-night I must pray for the dead; to-night I must

pray for the living."

Lady Strathbane, convinced by her earnestness of manner that Lucy's resolution was not to be shaken, except by undue violence, ceased all further importunity, and, with a tender pressure of the hand, suffered her to

retire to her own room, as she desired.

As soon as she reached this inviolate little sanctuary she flung herself into a chair, and, folding her arms on the table near it, she laid her face on them, and without limit, and without restraint, gave way to those convulsive tears which, like the over-charged thunder-cloud, relieve, as

they rend the heart.

She thought of the contrast, the perfectly bewildering, the incredible contrast afforded by this and that other Christmas-eve, when, instead of the almost regal splendour just witnessed, she saw, in the dim light of one poor candle, the ghastly brow, the blood-stained hands, the tattered garments of her brother, fresh from his first atrocious assassination—when, instead of the lady in her rich brocade, her glistening diamonds, her dainty expensiveness, she saw her mother, in squalid rags, raking the few expiring embers together with her skeleton fingers, to burn, to watch the blazing of the wretched remnant she had torn from that brother's foul linen, to effectually destroy the traces of guilt which would not yield to water.

She go to a ball! She join in the festive dance! She seek amusement! Never! oh, never! Gaiety was not for her—even peace was not for her. What kindred association could there be for one so desolate and forlorn, so spirit-laden and depressed, and the sought-for, the caressed, the buoyant, and the gleeful, the frivolous, and the fortunate? How could she mingle, without antagonism, among those whose eyes had never shed one tear of sorrow? whose hearts had never throbbed, save from anticipated pleasure? whose brows had never ached, save from the fatigue of its realisation? whose thoughts had never been left to the loneliness of self-communion? for crowds follow the prosperous, and flattery will share the meditations of the rich. How could she, then, enter into such a scene, and hope, and expect congeniality from it? No, no, no, not for her—not for her—not for the murderer's sister, the madman's daughter, are such bright moments on this earth!

To-night, as she said, she had to pray for the dead, and for the living. To-night, she had to descend into the deepest depths of her own bosom, to question of its concealed transgressions, to repent of them, to finish with the past, to settle for the future. To-night she had a task to fulfil, a self-imposed task, yet not the less imperative, not the less binding, not the less urgent—one that admitted of no delay—one that she had to render up to her God, to purchase salvation for a soul hovering on a fearful

and undefined eternity.

She bowed down in prayer, she placed her two hands forcibly over her ears, to exclude the exhilirating strains of music which reached even her solitude; and, still more, to shut out the light and joyous peals of laughter which rose above the inspiring band, so as to be deaf to all but the voice of that supplication, which her wounded spirit was breathing forth. She prayed thus for hours. Then she arose from her devotions, opened her desk, and wrote sheet after sheet, with indeed the pen of a ready writer; and long, long after that late active household was hushed to profound stillness-long, long after the beauteous dancers were sunk into the heavy slumber of over-wrought enjoyment, she still pursued her evidently momentous communication until the morning surprised her at it, when hastily running over the manuscript, and making some few corrections, she folded it up, directed it, sealed it, and placed it within her unlocked desk. After which, praying again for some time, she arranged her dress, descended to the breakfast-room, partook of that meal with her pupils, and then accompanied them to church.

About the middle of the service, Lucy, who had since its commencement evinced a most extraordinary degree of restlessness and agitation, as if at length her feelings had become quite intolerable, started up, and casting one wild passionate glance on the pretty devout little girls of whom she was so fond, and, without uttering one word, she rushed out of the pew—out of the church.

The children naturally concluding that their governess had been seized with some sudden but temporary indisposition, did not attempt to follow her, but waited with respectful patience to the end of their piously-instilled religious observances, confident of finding her at home, and hoping soon to be able, by their affectionate attentions, to restore her to health again. But no Lucy was there!—no Lucy met them on their return, to relieve their fears, to dissipate their alarm. Lucy Wentworth had not been seen by any one individual of the establishment since she and the young ladies crossed the lawn together after breakfast.

Instant inquiries were then set on foot, all the villagers with whom she was in the habit of visiting, were questioned, but without avail; the market-towns, the coach-offices, the public carriers, equally underwent the same strict investigation, in the expectation that some unaccountable impulse, some irresistible inclination had induced her to leave so unceremoniously, so almost—ungratefully But no clue could be obtained; then ponds were dragged, plantations searched, woods and fields traversed, but still, still to no purpose. And then Lady Strathbane, unable to endure her own suspense, and urged on by that of her weeping children, suggested the propriety of examining the poor girl's papers, to see if any one line could be found among them to elucidate the strange mystery of her disappearance.

The first thing which met her gaze was the packet which Lucy had spent so much of the preceding night in writing, and which was addressed to her, and from which she learnt the awful incidents now narrated, with the additional sad intimation, "that ere they would be perused by the eye of pity, or commented on by the tongue of scorn, the wretched writer would have sought deliverance from the acuteness of that agony of mind which only death could afford."

In consequence of this affecting revelation, the festivities suddenly terminated, and the company dispersed. Some had never even heard of this governess-some thought it absolutely vulgar and derogatory that the Countess of Strathbane should be so completely overcome by her committing suicide, as to disarrange the harmony of the moment for such a mere trifle; while certain young ladies, who had commenced indulging in rather romantic intimacies with certain young gentlemen, declared that it was a perfect nuisance to be so inopportunely interrupted. But the whole family felt that quiet was essential to recover the shock of losing one so gentle and so dear, and lost in such a distressing manner too; and as the last carriage drove away, a sensation of inexpressible relief pervaded every sorrowing bosom.

Advertisements were inserted in the local papers time after time, offering a large reward for any information which could be given, any article of dress which could be found, or-still more important—the remains of the regretted girl, both by the Earl of Strathbane and Mr. Spencer, but in vain; many reading with longing hearts of the "Mysterious disappearance of a young lady from church on Christmas-day," without knowing where to turn to find the cold corse which would bring warmth to

their as cold homes.

At the expiration of three weeks, however, a light spring-cart, used by market-gardeners, rattled up the avenue and stopped at the back entrance of the hall; in it two men were seated, and at the bottom lay a sort of rough bundle—it was the bloated and disfigured body of Lucy She had, it appears, flung herself into the river, and had lain buried there for some time, and then floated on the top as is usually the case, when she was joyfully recognised by the two men in question, who thought only of the money to be gained from the discovery. Nothing was left of the beauty lately so captivating, save the dark luxuriant hair, now falling in tangled masses over the bruised and battered face—bruised and battered even to disgust—yet did the delicate lips of Lady Strathbane imprint a fervent kiss on it-yet did the timid children, so naturally recoiling from death, lean over it, weep over it, and kiss it too.

A coroner's inquest was summoned. Mr. Spencer gave the chief particulars; he had just before seen Stanley Wentworth—he was an incurable lunatic-and no other verdict than insanity could be pronounced now over the suicidal corpse of his luckless sister, Lucy Wentworth.

Thus in her children were, indeed, fulfilled the predictions of Lucy Murray's agonised father; and thus will be also doomed to despair and death the offspring of all who venture their happiness, the happiness of their children, to the custody of a perverted reason—to the safeguard of

MADNESS!

AN AUTUMN REVERIE.

BY E. E. M. K.

La nature a deux chants, de bonheur de tristesse Qu'elle rend tour à tour ainsi que notre cœur; De l'une à l'autre note elle passe sans cesse Homme! l'une est ta joie, et l'autre ta douleur!

Welcome! sad Autumn, with thy changeful brow!
Thy solemn footstep, and thy passing smile.
I have no sympathy with Spring; but thou,
Like some true friend, canst comfort and beguile.
I would not see the earth for ever decked
In laughing blossoms, nor the skies all bright,
Like those blank eyes whose glances ne'er reflect
One softening cloud amid their heartless light.

Welcome! albeit with each chill sigh of thine
The thickened sap that erst in verdure ran,
Flooding the boughs with nature's vital wine,
Halts as if stricken by some fatal ban;
Though gentle flowers be smit and sicken fast
At sight of thee; though woods lift up a wail
And shudder, as it were some ghost had pass'd,
And sounds portentous sadden every gale.

Welcome! albeit the hours that round thee throng,
A hapless brood that clamour as they go,
No more sweet voiced attune the festive song,
Nor with blithe hands the meadow king-cups sow,
But wan and drooping like some exile band,
On foreign shores they waste in dreams of home,
Or sullen waves that seethe upon a sand
Which once has echoed with their bells of foam.

Ay, welcome! though the bright leaves fall,
More beautiful than gold,
Around thee, and thou takest all
The last fruit blushing on the wall—
The lily chaste and cold.

The sunflower with its radiant face—
A talisman of love—
Wild pansies that with lavish grace
Unbidden light each rustic place,
True as the orbs above.

Yon poppies, gorgeous as the ray,
From Sinai's bush that shone—
These corn-flowers blue as skies in May,
And this poor rose—take it, I pray,
Though 'tis my favourite one!

Yes, and you hardy wall-flower there

Yes, and you hardy wall-flower there,
That braved both storm and breeze;
Why should thy ruthless sickle spare,
Since time from out my heart doth tear
Blossoms more loved than these?

I listen, and the leaves still fall;
All golden shines the ground;
While, dumb beneath her frosted pall,
Lock'd fast in early winter's thrall,
The old earth sleepeth sound.

1 listen, but no voice awakes
The silence brooding near,
Save thine, lone bird, whose music makes,
As when one star through darkness breaks,
Surrounding gloom more drear.

Ye happy warblers in the woods,
Where are your pæans now?
Spirit of twilight solitudes,
Where your rich hymns, your rapture floods,
Poured from what myrtle bough?

I listen—still no voice replies;
The very waters sleep!
With skirring wing the field-fare flies,
Sole wand'rer of the darkling skies—
Sure 'tis a day to weep!

The heavens are charged with coming rain,
And with averted face
The sun smiles not, or, smiles in vain;
Such tears, such smiles, wake not again
The dead world's dying race.

And now the cold rain sullen drops;
Now wailing gusts arise;
And sulphur tints from yonder copse,
That all the sadden'd scene o'ertops,
Are scatter'd to the skies.

Piteous the distant flocks now bleat; Loudly the dun waves roar; Fiercer and fiercer drives the sleet— Alas! for thine unshodden feet, Poor wand'rer of the moor!

Round the rude mill the storm careers

Till, lo! with sudden blast

The spinning fabric disappears,

Swift as a meteor from the spheres,

Now flashing, and now past!

Yon rick, too, bristling 'mid a host
The pride of harvest soil,
Light as a chaff cloud strews the coast,
Where late it stood the giant boast
Of Nature and of toil!

But now the western skies are torn,
And through the chasm showers
Such gushing radiance, as the morn
Flings in mock roses to adorn
This Autumn world of ours.

Wider the burning portals spread;
And, oh! what glory now,
As from a shrine of jewels shed,
Plays like a halo o'er the dead
Autumn, around thy brow!

Swiftly the melting colours blend Amber with eve's soft green. Hues like the peach with such as wend Bright through youth's veins, or purpling lend Dye to the pansies sheen.

And, hark! amid those isles of light, What subtle sounds distil, Up 'mid the glory, lost to sight, Warbling its soul out in delight, A glad lark singeth still!

Oh! wondrous issue of so weird a way! Sad was my soul when first this rugged song Born of thy gloom, oh sad—sad Autumn day! Rose in rude chant from my untutored tongue. Sad was my soul-though with such softened woe

As tells of sympathy grief's lealest friend. Such as affliction's weary children know, Whom kindred spirits in sweet pity tend. Sad was my soul-for gazing on the earth,

Strewn with the plumage of Time's hastening wings.

The sleeping echoes of regret took birth Afresh - and murmured of departed things. The red-bright leaves that drifted at my feet,

So ripe with news of Nature's green decay, Stirred the still ghosts in memory's hushed retreat, And set me weeping with the Autumn day.

The stricken flowers, too, smiling 'mid the strife, (As holy thoughts oft wrestle with despair), Looked like those Angels who in early life,

Trod this cold world with me, and made it fair. The change—the chill—the breathless awe around; The spectral woods—the earth so wan and dumb

In her great fear—the glades without a sound Of life, save from the sobbing lips of some

Poor stream whose banks the blue-bells once had nestled round; These with their mute, mysterious language, spoke

Of sympathy to my o'erswelling heart,

I was alone no more! My voice then awoke To bless thee, Autumn, joyless as thou art!

Then ope'd the storm like some most precious book, With wond'rous words to soothe my spirit's woe;

In every phase I solemn comfort took,

And paused to hear th' orchestral anthem flow. Grand were those dirges round the dead earth's bier,

O'er which the ashen clouds so pall-like hung, Sweeter, methought that death-hymn of the year,

Than songs of jubilee in spring-time sung.

For, ah! when leaves put on their green array, Where are our sympathies?—heart—answers, where?

Since life is ever like an Autumn day,

Strewn with dead blooms—dead joys that once were fair—

Sad was my soul till yonder ray's caress-So Mara's waters 'mid the pilgrim land,

Touched by the "rod," forgot their bitterness, And flowed in honey o'er the desert sand.

Sad was my soul, but now 'mid yonder light I sing with with thee, glad minstrel of the sphere! Sweet is thy summons-wise thine upward flight, With wings for glory, who should linger here?

FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss Julia Addison,

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

CHAPTER XLVII.

Full many mischiefes follow cruel wrath; Abhorred bloodshed, and tumultuous strife.

SPENSER.

On finding herself safe, Florence clasped her hands in a momentary but fervent thanksgiving to Heaven, and then turned to thank her deliverer; but Pemberon had fainted.

Calling him by name, in accents of alarm, she untied the handkerchief round his neck, and applied some eau de Cologne, from a bottle she happened to have with her, to his temples. In a few minutes he showed symptoms of reviving.

"Where am I—how is this?" he murmured. "Oh, I remember. Florence, you behaved like a heroine. He might have baffled us if you had not seized that pistol when you did. Thank God you are rescued!"

"How can I express my gratitude to you, my dear, kind friend?" said Florence, shedding tears. "I have no words to——"

"Say nothing about that," he exclaimed, interrupting her. "I die no more than any other man would have done in my place."

"There are few, very few, who would have made such exertions, and acted so nobly," said Florence. "But how pale you are, and—oh, Heaven! I fear you are severely wounded."

"No," he replied, forcing a faint smile. "It is only my shoulder. The

ball grazed it, I suppose."

"It is bleeding dreadfully," said Florence, with a shudder, as she observed that the front of his shirt was saturated with blood.

"So much the better, it will prevent inflammation," said Pemberton. "Listen to me," he continued, speaking faintly, though with earnestness. "This carriage belongs to a kind old man. His servants will take you to his house. Do not be afraid to trust yourself—and—and if I should grow a little faint again, do not think of stopping; let them drive on, and do not be frightened—for it is of no—consequence."

He had hardly gasped out the last words with much difficulty, before he sank back in another swoon, from which his terrified companion tried in vain to recover him. She endeavoured to stanch the blood, which was

still flowing, by pressing her handkerchief to the wound.

In rather more than an hour, which to Florence seemed an age, they reached Mr. Harley's. That gentleman was standing at a window, and on hearing the sound of wheels, immediately hurried to the door.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed, eagerly, "have you rescued the young

lady? Have you brought her back with you?"

Without waiting for an answer, he sprang to the carriage-door, and starting at the sight which presented itself, exclaimed, in a voice of horror, "Oh, is he killed?"

"No-no! he is only fainting," answered Florence. "He told me of your kindness, and may I hope-"

"Come in, come in," said the old gentleman, interrupting her.

He handed her from the carriage, and then his servants lifted out the insensible Pemberton.

"Carry him carefully," said Mr. Harley, who seemed much agitated. "And John, fetch a surgeon instantly. Let me take you to my sister," he added, turning to Florence. "This way."

"Oh no, no!" she exclaimed, in great distress. "My kind friend, my protector; I cannot leave him in this state, while his life is perhaps in

danger."

The old man seemed touched by her grief. "Lean on my arm," he said, although he trembled almost as much as she did.

The servants had now carried Pemberton into the house, and laid him

"Where is your mistress?" asked Mr. Harley of one of them. "Call her directly-no, stay, I'll go myself. She is the best nurse in the world."

He returned in a few moments, accompanied by a mild-looking ladylike woman, considerably younger than himself. Florence was eagerly assisting in applying remedies to recover Pemberton from his swoon.

"Oh, Heaven!" she exclaimed, "is he—is he dead!" She looked with an expression of agony towards Mr. Harley and his sister, who were also bending over the insensible young man, with faces full of pity and interest.

"Oh no, no, no; do not speak of such a thing, for mercy's sake !" exclaimed the former. "Why does not the surgeon come? Let another servant be sent for him."

"John has hardly had time to get half-way to D- yet, Richard,"

said Miss Harley, gently.
"Yes, yes, yes!" cried the impatient old gentleman. "He might have been there three times over and back again. And this poor young fellow, perhaps, dying for want of assistance.

Mr. Harley's evident trepidation increased that of poor Florence.

"Tranquillise yourself, my dear," said Miss Harley, kindly; "your friend is recovering."

A faint tinge of colour returned to Pemberton's pale cheeks, and, half

opening his eyes, he murmured the word "Florence."

She was instantly by his side, overjoyed to hear him speak again; and, in answer to his half-expressed inquiry, assured him that she was safe and well.

"Do you feel better?" asked Mr. Harley, eagerly, going up to him and seizing his hand. "Tell me, tell me, what can we do for you?"

"You are very kind," said the sufferer, faintly, and closing his eyes

again.

Florence having given him some hartshorn and water, he seemed somewhat revived, and after thanking Miss Harley, and telling the old gentleman not to be alarmed, he said earnestly to Florence,

"Do not stay with me any longer. It must be very late, and you see

I am a great deal better. Pray go to rest."

Florence replied that she would soon, but that she was not tired.

"You must be," he returned. "I beg you not to stay. You cannot think how much worse it makes me to see you look so pale."

Florence, to pacify him, feigned to comply; but she only retired to the

other end of the room. Pemberton shortly grew worse, and appeared so extremely ill, that the old gentleman became more and more uneasy, and Florence was quite in despair.

At length, to the great relief of every one, the surgeon arrived.

Miss Harley led Florence into another apartment, and gently and kindly tried to comfort the poor girl and calm her fears. She made her sit down on a sofa and drink some wine and water, for she was almost overcome. After a few minutes she became able to thank Miss Harley for her kindness.

"But for you and your brother," she faltered, "I know not what would have become of me. I feel that I can never thank you suffi-

ciently."

Her hostess made a kind answer, and then, thinking it would divert her mind, led her on to tell the particulars of what had happened. Florence did so, and spoke of Pemberton's conduct with enthusiasm.

"He has indeed acted nobly," said her new friend; "I do not wonder

you are so much concerned about him."

"I have known him from childhood," said Florence, her eyes filling with tears as she spoke, "and have had innumerable proofs of his friend-ship. Do you think," she added, "that Mr. Harley will come and tell us what the surgeon says of him?"

"I have no doubt he will, my dear. But, if you like, I will beg Mr.

Wilson himself to speak to us."

Florence thanked her, and in a few minutes the surgeon was shown into the room. When questioned as to the state of his patient, he said that Pemberton's wound was of a severe though not a dangerous nature; which last expression he qualified by adding, that at least he believed there was no present danger.

"No present danger!" repeated Florence, sadly, when the surgeon

had departed.

"We must hope for the best, my dear," said Miss Harley, kindly taking her hand. "I feel sure that he will soon recover."

Mr. Harley now entered.

"I never saw any one bear pain so well as that young man," he said.

"Mr. Wilson has been putting him to great torture by extracting the bullet, but he scarcely said a word. He bade me implore you," continued Mr. Harley, addressing Florence, "not to distress yourself on his account, for that he shall be much better to-morrow. Do not weep," he added, for Florence was unable to restrain her tears. "It is not every man who would think of a lady when he was so ill—not even of such a sweet creature as yourself. I fear we are many of us very selfish. I am glad you feel for him though, for I am sure he is worthy of your affection."

"He is a very old friend, sir," said Florence, "and I love him like a brother."

"Like a brother—yes, oh yes; I understand," answered the old gentleman, with a look which showed he was more confirmed than ever in the idea of the two young people being lovers.

"And now," said Miss Harley, "had you not better retire to rest, my dear? You are extremely wearied, and you can do no good by sitting up."

Florence expressed her readiness, but did not depart until she had endeavoured to express her gratitude to Mr. Harley for his kindness to

herself and Pemberton, and her regret at the trouble and inconvenience

they caused the family.

"Don't say a word about it, pray," interrupted the old gentleman, with more than usual impatience of manner. "I am deeply interested in him, and what can it be but a pleasure to do anything for you!"

Florence now thought of Lady Seagrove, and the anxiety her guardian

would be feeling on her account, and she told her kind friends.

"Bless my soul! yes," cried Mr. Harley. "I ought to have recollected that before. Poor lady, she must be half distracted. We will send a message to her immediately. Teesdale, you say. John can perform great part of the journey by railroad, then."

"I will write a note," said Florence; and she did so without delay.

The messenger despatched, Mr. Harley said, hesitatingly,

"I am most anxious to hear your adventures, and how your poor companion got his injury; but you must be so tired, I do not like to ask you to-night."

"I will tell you all, with pleasure," answered Florence, reseating her-

self good-naturedly, although she was dreadfully fatigued.

Miss Harley was gone to visit the patient, and in the mean time Florence again related all the occurrences of this eventful day, as connectedly as she could, for the incessant exclamations of indignation against Sir

Robert Craven with which her auditor interrupted her narrative.

"The wretch!" he exclaimed; "the brutal, unmanly, heartless fellow! As for you, my dear, you behaved charmingly; and I have no words to express my admiration of Mr. Pemberton's conduct. But here is my sister. How is he now, Sophy?"

"He is asleep," answered Miss Harley.

"The very best thing for him," said her brother. "What a brute that Sir Robert is!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Worthy sir, You are in all things too impatient.

Old Play.

FLORENCE's first inquiry in the morning was about Pemberton. She was informed that he had passed a tolerable night, and that the surgeon pronounced him to be going on well.

It was cheering to her spirits to see the kind looks with which she was greeted by the worthy old gentleman and his sister, on descending to the

breakfast-room.

"Here are two letters for you," said Mr. Harley, presenting them to

One was from Gertrude, and was full of expressions of tenderness and affection, sympathy for the alarm and distress she had undergone, and gratitude for her providential escape. The other, of which she read a considerable portion aloud to her host and hostess, was from Lady Seagrove, and ran as follows:

"MY DEAREST CHILD,-

"I was almost distracted when your letter reached me. Its perusal caused me both joy and grief. Joy to hear that you were safe, and grief that my nephew should have behaved in such a shameful manner. Pemberton

acted like a hero. Pray give him my warmest thanks. Immediately his message arrived, which frightened me dreadfully, I sent off all the servants, but they soon came back, as there was not a horse to be had. My brother was, as you know, out sailing. He did not return till late; and I do not believe he either could or would have done any good had he been at home

"Poor Gertrude was nearly wild with grief, and she fainted on hearing of Robert's dreadful cruelty in firing at poor Pemberton. Miss Trimmer felt as much as any one, and was in hysterics all the afternoon, and half the night. Pray thank your kind friends in my name for their goodness to you. As you say they insist on your not being removed to-day, I will not send for you until to-morrow. Take care of yourself, and send me a note by this day's post; I am very anxious to hear how Pemberton is going on. I have written to his mother, and also to his brother, Lord Swellington, who is expecting him at the castle to-day. I told them that he met with an accident to his shoulder when Sir Robert and he were out riding, which I hope will be well in a few days. I was sorry not to tell the truth, but as MissTrimmer, who suggested this version of the story, observed, if not the exact truth it is very like it.

"After such wrong and improper conduct on Robert's part, you may be sure, dear Florence, that even had I not previously made a determination to that effect, I would not suffer you to be any more importuned with

his addresses.

"God bless you, my dear child.

"Your ever loving "SELINA SEAGROVE."

"Is it not strange," said Mr. Harley to his sister, when they were alone together, "that her son should thus be brought in contact with me?"

She assented, and the old gentleman, after repeating "Yes, strange—very strange indeed!" fell into a reverie which lasted until Florence again entered the room.

"You do not look well, my dear," said Miss Harley, kindly, after observing her for some time, as she sat turning over the leaves of a book of prints that lay on the table, her face becoming first flushed, then pale,

and then flushed again.

This observation of his sister's made Mr. Harley very uncomfortable. Being, as he said, something of a doctor himself, for he had always had a great fondness for the study of medicine, he insisted on feeling her pulse. It was extremely quick, and it was evident to her kind friends that she was very unwell. Although she strove to persuade both them and herself that this was not the case, her indisposition increased so much, that about the middle of the day she required very little persuasion to induce her to retire to bed again. The medical man who came in the afternoon to visit Pemberton, said that she had a great deal of fever, probably owing partly to a sudden chill, and partly to the great alarm and agitation she had undergone, acting upon a frame previously weakened by illness. Towards evening she grew worse, and Miss Harley despatched a letter to Lady Seagrove, saying that she would not be well enough to be removed the next day.

The following morning matters did not wear a favourable aspect with either of the invalids. Florence was not the least better, and Pemberton

had had a very restless night. Miss Harley delayed writing until just before the post went out, wishing to give the latest account, and hoping that it might be a better one; but Florence was just the same, while Pemberton's unfavourable symptoms had continued to increase during the

day, and he was now in a high fever.

Poor Mr. Harley became quite miserable; he wandered about the house, going from one patient's room to the other, and refusing to retire to rest. Early in the morning, Mr. Wilson, who had been with Pemberton nearly all night, proposed calling in further advice, and accordingly Dr. Davis, a physician of reputation in the neighbouring town of C—, was sent for. "You think him no better, then?" said the old gentleman,

"Quite the reverse," answered the surgeon, looking grave.

very uneasy about him."

"And it must be full an hour and a half before Dr. Davis can get here," said Mr. Harley. "Cannot you do anything for him in the mean time? You do nothing, that I see."

"There is nothing more to be done at present," replied the surgeon;

"We must really wait with patience, and hear what-

"Don't talk to me of patience, Mr. Wilson," exclaimed the old gentleman. "It's no use; I can't be patient. Go and see if you can't do something for the poor girl there _____"

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- "Who is ill?" asked the sufferer, whose ear had caught Mr. Harley's "Whose heart will be broken?" last words.
- "Oh, nobody's-nothing-you are dreaming, my dear boy," cried the old gentleman, hastening to him.

"No, I am not," replied the invalid. "Is it Florence?"

"Oh no, no, no!" exclaimed Mr. Harley.

"Yes," said Pemberton, "I know it is. Is she," he continued, speaking slowly, and with difficulty, "is she very ill? Do not deceive me."

"N-o, no, not very," answered the old gentleman.
"I feared it was so," murmured the sufferer, growing confused. "Poor - He meant it would break Wentworth's heart. Wentworth thingis here, then?"

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draw Mr. Harley away.

But the old gentleman did not heed this advice.

"No, no, I did not mean that," he exclaimed, imagining that Pemberton was thinking of a rival. "Wentworth is not here. He shall never have anything to do with Florence. Lady Seagrove will not suffer it; she told me so herself."

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"No, no, I did not mean that," he exclaimed, imagining that Pemberton was thinking of a rival. "Wentworth is not here. He shall never have anything to do with Florence. Lady Seagrove will not suffer it; she told me so herself."

Pemberton opened his eyes and fixed them on him, with the expression of one who is making a painful effort to collect his faculties.

"I thought," he said at last, in a half wandering manner, "that the

marriage was all settled."

"Oh, no, no, it never will be!" cried the old gentleman. "It cannot be, for Wentworth," he continued, thinking to put an end to the delusion at once and for ever, and believing that Wentworth was the surname of the Sir Robert he had heard spoken of with so much indignation, "Wentworth is dead."

"Please, sir," said a maid-servant, in a low voice, "Miss Harley wishes Mr. Wilson to step and see Miss Hamilton directly. She is worse."

The surgeon's attention was at that moment engrossed by Pem-

berton.

He had looked wildly at Mr. Harley for a few instants, as if not perfectly comprehending his words; then suddenly becoming sensible of their meaning, exclaimed, "Oh, God, Wentworth dead!" and fainted.

"Merciful Heaven, what have I done!" exclaimed the unfortunate

author of this scene, clasping his hands in frantic terror.

"Leave the room, sir, I entreat you," said the surgeon. "No, no, no, I will not," muttered the old gentleman.

"Mr. Harley, I conjure you—if you would not have his death to answer for;" said the surgeon, earnestly, for he saw that Pemberton was recovering, and dreaded the effect of any more agitation upon him.

"I—I won't speak a word;" replied Mr. Harley.

"Dead," murmured the patient, "Wentworth dead! Poor fellow—poor Florence——"

"May I not tell him he is not dead?" whispered Mr. Harley in the

surgeon's ear.

Mr. Wilson gave him permission, but Pemberton was no longer sufficiently sensible to understand him, and all that Mr. Harley said, only seemed to increase his excitement and fever.

"Do not say any more to him, my dear sir, I implore you," said the

surgeon. "Indeed-indeed you had better leave the room."

After a few more fruitless attempts to remove the erroneous impression he had given, the old gentleman obeyed; and retiring to his own apartment, lamented with sighs and tears the mischief he had done.

The medical man found Florence considerably worse. Her fever had increased, and a cough, which had at first been slight, had become dis-

tressing, and almost incessant.

Having given her some medicine, he returned to Pemberton, whom he

found in a most alarming state of delirium.

When the physician arrived, he expressed his opinion that Mr. Wilson's treatment of both the sufferers had been judicious.

"But are they-do you think either of them in danger?" asked Mr.

Harley, as the doctor sat in his study, writing prescriptions.

"Mr. Pemberton certainly is," replied the physician. Mr. Harley groaned. "The young lady," continued Dr. Davis, "is not dangerously ill at present, but there is some reason to fear that unless her cough and difficulty of breathing speedily yield to——"

"I see it all," interrupted the old gentleman, with another groan.

"Inflammation of the lungs is what you are afraid of, is it not?"

Dr. Davis replied in the affirmative, and rose to depart.

"You will come again before long?" said Mr. Harley. "Sometime in the course of the day?"

The physician promised that he would; and when he was gone Mr. Harley went in search of his sister.

"Had we not better let Lady Seagrove know?" he asked, in a melan-

choly tone.

"Certainly, my dear Richard;" was the reply.

"And had we not better tell her that there is plenty of room in the house if she likes to come?"

"I think so," replied Miss Harley. "And Florence's friend, Gertrude,

whom she so often talks about."

"Oh, yes, to be sure. Write directly, will you? John shall go over to Teesdale. If that poor young fellow would but get better! What makes me now so very wretched," he added, throwing himself into a chair, from which, however, he again started before he had finished his sentence, "is the thought that I have made him a great deal worse by my folly. Mr. Wilson, though not in quite such plain language, has just told me so."

The result of Miss Harley's letter was, that about seven o'clock in the evening Lady Seagrove, accompanied by Gertrude, arrived at Mr. Harley's. Miss Harley came down to the drawing-room to receive

them.

Lady Seagrove had sunk on a sofa quite overpowered by her feelings. Gertrude, much agitated, stood beside her. Lady Seagrove took Miss Harley's hand, and pressed it in silence.

"How is she?" she asked, when she could find voice to speak.

"I am happy to tell you she is somewhat better," replied Miss Harley. "Dr. Davis, who has just seen her again, says that her worst symptoms have abated."

"Thank God!" said Gertrude, bursting into tears.

"And Mr. Pemberton?" said Lady Seagrove.

"I grieve to tell you he is much in the same state. The medical men

have not yet at all succeeded in subduing his fever."

"I am grieved to hear it," said Lady Seagrove, with an air of deep concern; whilst Gertrude, notwithstanding all her efforts to command herself, sobbed aloud.

"I am most distressed," continued Lady Seagrove, "to hear such an account of poor Mr. Pemberton. And I must write to Lady Swellington

to-morrow.

The newly-arrived guests now followed Miss Harley to Florence's room. Lady Seagrove shed tears as she kissed her burning cheek; and spoke to her so kindly that it brought tears to the sick girl's eyes. It was a real pleasure to Florence to see Gertrude. She thanked both her friend and guardian for coming to be with her, and said that she thought she should be quite well in a few days. Miss Harley had warned them not to tell her of Pemberton's increased illness, but Gertrude had nearly betrayed it by her look of distress when his name was mentioned.

"Is-is Miss Trimmer here?" Florence presently inquired.

"No," answered Lady Seagrove. "She went with the admiral this morning to Lady Dorcas Woollersby's. He left her there on his way to London. Lady Dorcas is going to have another bazaar, and Wilhelmina was so useful the time before, that she begged her to come for a week. You don't want her, my dear, do you?"

"Oh no, not in the least!" replied Florence, with more warmth than she had intended. Not wishing to hurt Lady Seagrove's feelings with regard to her favourite, she added, quickly, "Who could I want more, dear Lady Seagrove, now that you and Gertrude are come?"

After a little more conversation, Miss Harley finding that Florence was

growing restless, proposed returning to the drawing-room.

"I have ordered tea," she continued, "as you say you have taken an early dinner; and you must want some refreshment. Besides, I have not yet introduced you to my brother."

The evening was a melancholy one to all parties.

As soon as he had hastily taken a cup of coffee, Mr. Harley, who appeared in a highly nervous and excited state, quitted the room to repair to that of Pemberton.

"How much interested your brother seems to be about that poor young man," remarked Lady Seagrove to Miss Harley. "I think I

understood that neither you nor he had seen him before?"

"We have never seen him before," replied Miss Harley; "but we, or at least my brother, knew his mother, the Dowager Lady Swellington,

very intimately, when she was the Honourable Miss Wilmot."

"Indeed!" said Lady Seagrove. "She was a very handsome woman. Her son resembles her a good deal in person. He has the same brilliant black eyes, the same complexion, the same well-formed mouth, and interesting smile."

"Yes," said Miss Harley, "the likeness strikes me as very strong; although it is now many years since I saw Lady Swellington. She has

but this one son, I think?"

"No. The late Lord Swellington, however, had four by his first

marriage, and five daughters."

"Mr. Pemberton's mother," said Miss Harley, "must of course be much distressed to hear of his illness?"

"Lord Swellington wrote me word that she was in Paris; but that he

would forward my letter. She is but little in England."

During this conversation Gertrude had slipped, unobserved, out of the room to seek Florence's bedside. The invalid was awake, and smiled with pleasure at the sight of Gertrude.

"I am come to sit with you, and amuse you a little if I can, dear Florence," said Gertrude. "You must not speak more than a few words, but I can read or talk you to sleep, as I used sometimes when

you were ill at Teesdale."

The girls conversed for about a quarter of an hour, at the end of which time Florence sunk into a quiet slumber, having first charged Gertrude, in case she should fall asleep, to be sure and go down-stairs again. Gertrude did not go, however, but sat by her side in silence. In about two hours Miss Harley and Lady Seagrove, on coming softly into the room, found her with her head resting on her arm, which was thrown over the back of her chair, her clustering auburn curls shading her face, asleep.

"Poor child, she is tired," whispered Lady Seagrove. "I know she has hardly slept for the last two nights from anxiety about her friend. But she has been crying. There is a tear still on her eyelashes, and her cheek is flushed and wet. How pretty and innocent she looks, does she

not? But what can have made her weep, I wonder?"

THE PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS OF THE GREEKS AND ROMANS.

BY NICHOLAS MICHELL,

AUTHOR OF "SPIRITS OF THE PAST," &c.

THE mind of man has, in all ages, at certain seasons, required amusement. The occasional suspension of mental as well as bodily labour has been found absolutely necessary to his well-being. The stretched fibre of intellect must be relaxed; the bow, so to speak, of labour must be unbent. This truth was eminently acknowledged by the ancients; and no people studied more their amusements, both public and private, than the Greeks and Romans. In the order of time, we glance at the public festivals and dramatic entertainments of the Hellenic nation.

The four great festivals of Greece, that had for their chief object the amusement of the people, were periodically held at Olympia near Elis, Nemea in Argolis, on the Isthmus of Corinth, and at Delphi. These festivals, named respectively the Olympic, Nemean, Isthmian, and Pythian games, were very similar to each other, and the date of their institution is lost in the mists of Mythic fable. The most important were the games celebrated at Olympia, and since they may serve as an illustration of the others, we will briefly to them direct our attention.

Different nations, at different periods of the world's history, have dated their era from some great public event, or religious revolution. Thus the Romans compute their time from the foundation of their city; the Mohammedans from the flight of their Prophet from Mecca; and the Christians from the nativity of Christ. The epoch of the Greeks dates from the Olympic games, commencing in the year 776 before the Christian era. An Olympiad was that space of time which elapsed between two celebrations of the festival; this festival occurring once in every forty-nine and fifty lunar months alternately, the Olympiad consisted of four years, while the games were said to take place every fifth year. That these sports, independently of their original object, were of great national utility, cannot be doubted. They created a spirit of generous emulation, both as regarded literature and feats of manly prowess, among the small states of Greece. Unlike the exhibitions of the gladiators in after ages at Rome, they seemed to exercise no demoralising influence upon the minds of the people. Such sports as horse and foot-races, leaping, throwing the discus, and wrestling, served to invigorate the body, without engendering cruelty, or producing licentiousness. It is true they did not favour a development of the higher faculties of the mind; boxing, also, was introduced in the twenty-third Olympiad; but the cestus, which covered the hands of the combatant, was not, like the cestus used by the Romans, loaded with lead or iron; it was made of leather, and rarely a Greek pugilist suffered seriously, while, on the other hand, the Roman boxer was frequently killed in the arena.

None were permitted to attend the Olympic games but such as belonged to the Hellenic race. This law had the effect of nationalising the sports. Each state, as well as the Greek colonies in Asia and the islands, sent a representative to the Olympic festival; such a practice strengthened the common bond of union; and, notwithstanding the mutual rivalries

and jealousies to which at times it gave birth, the custom was undoubtedly highly beneficial to the Greeks as a people. Women, at first, were not allowed to witness the diversions, all who rashly intruded themselves being doomed even to death. As, however, the law abated its rigour, and morals became more relaxed, we find the fair sex not only present, but even competing for prizes. These prizes were purely honorary; glory was the ruling passion of the ancient Greek; the Divinity he worshipped in spirit beyond even Jove or Minerva; for glory he drew his sword, composed his poem, and strove at the Olympic games; hence a garland of wild olive, for such was the Olympian prize, was thought a sufficient

recompense for the victor.

From the Grecian games, we proceed to consider a higher species of amusement, in which the intellectual faculties were appealed to, and the pleasure experienced was not derived from the exhibition of feats of bodily We allude to the drama. The Greeks were essentially a dramatic people; their literature, their acts, were imbued with the theatric spirit; their very history, from the birth of Liberty to its death under the Macedonian despot, reads like a solemn tragedy. Athens is the mother of the dramatic art. As far as records and history show, the Babylonians in all their splendour, and the Egyptians with all their civilisation, had not the remotest notion of scenic representation. ancient Etrurians cultivated the drama, but in what form it is nearly impossible for us to say, since no fragment of their plays has been preserved. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the word "hister," which, in the Etruscan language, signifies an actor, has with a little variation been introduced, with a similar meaning attached to it, into most of the European languages; and, at this day, we apply to the science of the stage the term "histrionic art."

On the authority of ancient writers, it has long been the custom to consider Thespis, who flourished five centuries before Christ, the inventor That he travelled through Greece during the festival of of tragedy. Dionysia, performing a species of plays, appears certain. Masks, also, were ascribed to Thespis; and by their means he was enabled to perform The idea of the chorus, likewise, seems to divers characters in succession. have originated with him. But the rude Thespian essays which provoked the animadversions of the law-giver Solon, were shortly followed by performances that attained to a high degree of perfection. Æschylus, the soldier and poet, fresh from the glories of Marathon and Salamis, invested the attic drama at once with the spirit of magnificence and grandeur. Of his ninety tragedies, seven only have come down to us; and though extravagant and improbable in their plots, they are full of passion and dramatic fire. The names of Sophocles and Euripides, the successors of Æschylus, need only be mentioned to remind the reader of dramas which embody all that is grand and affecting. Fatalism, or the law of an inevitable destiny, casts a darkness over all their productions, yet they are not the less admirable as simple and sublime works of art.

The Greek theatre was not roofed, but open to the sky. Plays were not, as in modern times, daily enacted, but only during certain festivals; hence it was necessary that the building should be of great size to contain the people who, on such occasions, would naturally throng places of public amusement. The Theatre of Bacchus, at the foot of the

Acropolis in Athens, although 250 feet in diameter, was small in comparison with many other edifices appropriated to dramatic exhibitions. The Greek theatres at Ephesus and Syracuse appear, by their remains, to have been of far greater size. There were many drawbacks to scenic representation connected with the Greek stage, and which to modern taste The performance invariably would appear almost fatal to success. took place during the day; thus the magic of artificial light was wanting; the glaring sun would destroy all illusion, and the picture exhibited must have been broad, harsh, and real. Whether the mask which always covered the actor's face, could, in theatres of so great extent, have been dispensed with, is doubtful; but many of these masks, as described by Greek writers, and preserved in statues, seem to us sufficiently grotesque and revolting. That one palpable inferiority attached to ancient representations, when compared with modern, admits of no question. Women were not allowed to tread the stage. This fact goes at once to throw a coldness over the whole atmosphere of the Greek drama. What! the finer feelings which only woman can justly delineate—the pathos of grief, the delirium of love, and all as they are developed in both sexes-must man alone, unassisted, embody?

We can scarcely conceive the most beautiful drama ever penned commanding success, if the female characters introduced are to be supported by the opposite sex. We would instance the "Antigone" of Sophocles, as being, perhaps, of all the Greek dramas the best known to the general reader. This masterpiece of the Athenian bard was put upon the stage at Potsdam, in November, 1841. Classic rule, as far as possible, was rigidly followed. The entire pit was thrown into an orchestra, where the chorus was stationed. The chorus was a distinguishing and capital feature in the Greek drama, the office of its members being to sing between the acts, the music and poetry having reference to the scenes exhibited in the play. The chorus in the theatre at Potsdam appears to have been very effective; and, according to classic model, it ascended from the orchestra to the stage when the scene required, and again descended in sight of the company. Other minutiæ, as regarded the dropping curtain, the immovable scena, and the crowding of statues, were likewise strictly

attended to.

Entire and brilliant success crowned the classic attempt; and a success not at all inferior rewarded those who produced the same play, although with less antique accompaniment, on the boards of Covent-garden Theatre, London. In one essential point, however, be it observed, the modern actors deviated in their performance from the ancient; and had they not done this, we fear the representation of "Antigone" would, in the present day, have proved an utter failure. The sisterly affection, the grief, the horror, the passionate love, and the crushing agony of contemplated death, which agitate and harrow up the soul of the beautiful daughter of Œdipus-all this combination of emotions in a female breast, was to be delineated by a man on the Greek stage; this man, too, wore a mask! however he might cleverly imitate the accents or gestures of a woman, she only can express with full force, and irresistible pathos, her own feelings. No, we feel ourselves justified in asserting, that had the finest actor who ever trod the Athenian stage, been called back to existence for the occasion, and had he assumed the part so exquisitely represented by a Miss

Vandenhoff, or a Miss Faucit, his performance before a Prussian, or an English auditory, would not have met with the slightest success. The Greeks were delighted with the representation of "Antigone," and awarded to the author the government of Samos. What then? they ever repressed the intellect of woman; they did not understand her powers;

they were contented with the counterfeit.

Nevertheless, we must not be supposed to argue that the drama of the Greeks was ineffective. Had this been the case, theatrical representations would never have been so passionately cherished by all ranks of the people; and, as a proof of the prevalence among them of this dramatic spirit or furor, we may observe, that scarcely in the present day are the ruins of any old Greek town of distinction to be found without the remains of a theatre or odeon in the vicinity. The ancient Hellenic races were a lively, imaginative people; they seem to have been imbued with a love of glory, the arts, and theatricals; inventive wit and animal spirits characterise their descendants at the present hour. Glory has long been dead; she may, however, Phænix-like, rise from her funeral pile under the auspices of a free king; but whether the drama will ever gain its ancient eminence is a problem beyond our solution.

We have now to consider the public amusements of the Romans; many of them were borrowed from the Greeks; at the same time, they were more varied, and carried out on a more extended scale than the diversions of the latter people; the buildings, also, dedicated to the Goddess of Pleasure, were of far larger proportions than the Greek edifices, their gigantic remains, in Rome and other parts of Europe, filling us

with astonishment at this day.

The earliest Roman games, of which we have authentic records, appear to have been those of the Circus. They were named Ludi Circenses, and originally much resembled the Olympic and Nemean games of Greece, for they consisted principally of horse and chariot-races, running, leaping, boxing, and wrestling. The victor was crowned with a palm-wreath, but luxury and the wants of polished life soon called for rewards more substantial; and money was added to the token of mere empty honour. One feature of the Ludi Circenses distinguished them from the Greek diversions; it was the combat of wild beasts, and an incredible number of animals of all descriptions was sometimes destined to perish for the

amusement of the populace.

There were several circuses in Rome, but the most ancient and the largest was that called the Circus Maximus. It was situated between the Palatine and Aventine hills. Erected as early as the time of Tarquinius Priscus, beautified and enlarged by the succeeding kings and the consuls of the republic, it received its last embellishments from Julius Cæsar and Augustus. It measured in length 2187 feet, and in width 1000 feet; hence its circumference was about one English mile. The outer wall consisted of two stories adorned with columns, the summit forming a terrace. Rows of seats for the spectators extended all around, the lower seats being of stone, the upper of wood. The people, by way of protection, were separated from the open space by a podium and a moat. A wall, about eight feet high, called the *spina*, ran almost through the entire length of the Circus. At each extremity of this wall were three small pyramids termed metæ, or goals, around which the race-chariots

The spina, which the racer always kept on his right hand, was beautifully adorned with miniature temples, statues, and obelisks. Augustus placed in the Circus Maximus an obelisk 126 feet high, which he had conveyed from Egypt for the purpose. The carceres, whence the chariots started, were at the semi-circular end of the Circus; here, also, stood two statues of Mercury set apart from each other, a chain extending between them to keep in the horses. The racers commenced their career when he who presided over the games dropped the mappa, or cloth. Four factions prevailed among the charioteers in Rome, distinguished by the colour of their badges; namely, the white, red, skycoloured, and green factions. Sometimes party spirit among the people ran so high, each person declaring for his favourite faction, that tumult and bloodshed were the result. To say the least of it, chariot-races must have been a splendid and fascinating sight. The finest horses of Syria and Thrace, harnessed two, three, and even six abreast (the Romans never placed horses, one preceding the other, as we do); the vehicles shaped like a half-moon, and resplendent with gold and costly ornaments; the charioteers in flowing tunics of purple; the cheers of the multitude, and the excitement of the whole scene—we can scarcely marvel at the passionof the Roman people for these diversions: so intense, indeed, was that passion during the reign of the first emperors, that an expression became common to denote the two great necessaries of life-it was panis et circenses-bread, and the games of the circus!

In the Circus, also, mock-fights, called *Ludi Trojæ*, were exhibited; sea-fights, by the introduction of water from the Tiber, were even not uncommon; and, as for animals, each great man seemed to vie with the other in the endeavour to purchase or procure the largest number for destruction. Pompey, during his consulship, is said to have sent to the Circus five hundred lions and eighteen elephants, all of which were killed

in five days.

About two centuries after the institution of the Ludi Circenses, dramatic entertainments began in Rome. It is rather singular that the drama was introduced, as Livy informs us, during a pestilence, from the idea that the representation of plays would appease the wrath of the Hence it is evident that stage-performances were originally viewed in the light of religious ceremonies. It is very certain that the drama, although patronised more or less liberally at different epochs, was never very popular with the Romans. Accustomed to having their feelings excited and harrowed by imposing spectacles, and exhibitions of blood, the more refined species of amusement afforded by plays, the wit and the pathos of the dramatic poet, were lost upon them. The Romaneye ever wanted to be dazzled; they sought to gratify sense rather than spirit. So long, therefore, as the citizens could gain access to places where horses raced, tigers and elephants fought, and gladiators bled in mortal combat, they cared little for the calm, intellectual pleasures of the stage.

Yet the drama, after its rise (in the year of Rome 391), was at no time entirely neglected. The players originally came from Etruria, and at first did little more than dance to the *tibia*, or flute, and perform in dumb show. Livius Andronicus, who flourished 240 years before Christ, was the first Roman dramatic writer that introduced the Greek method-

of acting, and, like our Shakspeare, he appeared in his own plays. Plautus and Terence followed, and, from these authors alone, perfect dramas have come down to our day. Many remarkable instances occur among the Romans of genius, in spite of all obstacles, forcing its way to honour and fame. Plautus and Terence belonged to the lowest class of society; the former was a poor labourer working at a hand-mill for his daily bread, and the latter was a Carthaginian slave. Yet these two dramatists now stand out from the Roman people; their fame has survived twenty centuries, while the gay, luxurious patrician, the distinguished of that period, even emperors themselves, are forgotten. So magical is the

gift, so enduring is the talisman of genius!

Plautus and Terence composed comedies from a Greek model. actors, for the most part, appeared in the costume of Greece, for the plays represented the manners of that country. This species of drama was styled Palliata, from the Greek robe pallium. The Comædia Togata was applied to plays in which the Roman toga was worn. After Livius Andronicus, we find Ennius, Pacuvius, Accius, and Asinius Pollio conspicuous names: yet of the works of all these dramatists scarcely a fragment is now extant. The Roman theatre was built precisely like the Greek, except that the orchestra in the former was of less dimensions, and did not contain the chorus. The Roman actors laboured under the same disadvantages as those of Greece; the scena, at the back of the stage, was immovable, and sometimes extended, as in the theatres of Scaurus and Pompey, two hundred feet in width. Women took no share in the performances, and it does not appear, with the exception of the celebrated Roscius, that the actors ever abandoned the old custom of wearing masks. The most famous theatres in Rome were those of Mar-

cellus, Pompey, and Balbus.

The third kind of public amusement among the Romans, and which, in the days of the emperors, was more popular than the diversions of the stage, or even of the Circus, was that of the Amphitheatre. There the true character of the Roman, as corrupted from the heroic and more generous times of the Republic, displayed itself. Within the walls of the Amphitheatre, scarcely an exhibition took place that was not associated either with ferocity, suffering, or death. The Amphitheatre, as its name imports, is a double theatre, or two theatres joined, forming an ellipsis. The arena, surrounded by the podium, or wall of defence, occupies the centre, whence a series of benches ascends nearly to the height of the outer encircling wall. Staircases, corridors, and precinctions, make the communication between one bank of benches and the other complete. Amphitheatres, which were erected in the latter days of the Republic, were constructed of wood; the first one, built of stone, was raised in the time of Augustus. But the great Amphitheatre, which afforded a pattern for the construction of all those which rapidly arose in the first and second centuries of our era, was the Colosseum at Rome. The huge building of Titus and Vespasian, which is said to have taken its name from the colossal statue of Nero standing near it, surpassed at that period all the edifices of its kind, and it has never since been equalled.

It would far exceed our limits either to describe the Colosseum, or to dwell on the numerous sports that took place within its walls. Here criminals, for the amusement of the high and the noble, the matron and the maiden, were torn to pieces by the lion of the desert; here the early Christian, by order of a Nero and a Domitian, suffered all the torments which these potentates considered due unto him as a despiser of the gods of Rome.

But the favourite exhibition, not only in the Colosseum, but in all the amphitheatres in the provinces, was the show of gladiators; and since this demoralising amusement stands prominent among the Roman diversions, we cannot close our brief sketch without offering a few observations on

the subject.

As in the case of the Roman drama, it is remarkable that the combats of the gladiators should owe their origin to religious superstition. It had been a custom to slaughter captives at the tombs of distinguished men slain in battle, to appease their manes; instead thereof, gladiators were appointed to fight at the grave, until one fell as a victim to the gods. The first recorded exhibition took place in the year of Rome 490, when the Bruti, two brothers, displayed these combats at the funeral of their father. By degrees the spectacle became common. Gladiators fought in the Forum, in the public schools; and, on the building of amphitheatres, the sports were thoroughly nationalised, altogether standing apart from any notion identifying them with religious observances.

Gladiators at first were malefactors, captives, or slaves; but, in process of time, free-born citizens espoused the profession, being regularly trained under a master called *Lanista*. Men of high birth also appeared in the arena. The stronger the public passion for these spectacles grew, gladiators, as a necessary consequence, increased, until we find them in Rome, and the provincial towns, so numerous, that in the year 76 B.c. a company of gladiators at Capua, rising against their master and retiring to the mountains, were speedily joined by others of their profession, peasants and slaves; Spartacus lead them on, and for three years they spread terror and destruction through divers parts of Italy, and defied the Roman

armies.

The gladiator who fought for hire was held in more estimation than he who was said to be ad ludum damnatus—condemned to the exhibition. The former was matched with his antagonist either by previous arrangement, or by the manager of the games. Gladiators, as a matter of course, were the finest and most athletic men that Italy and other countries produced. Dacia, Northern Gaul, and the mountains of Thrace, were famous for the gladiators which they sent to Rome; and these men were fed, petted, and trained, just like the lions and tigers who shared with them the honour of amusing the dwellers of the Eternal City.

Gladiators fought in divers ways, and with a variety of weapons. Some were called "Secutores," from the privilege they had of pursuing their adversaries around the arena: thus, a Secutor is matched with a Retiarius; the former has a shield and sword, the latter a three-pointed lance, called a trident, and a rete or net. The Retiarius endeavours by his net to embarrass the movements of his adversary, and then despatch him with his trident. If, however, he misses his cast, and his net does not fall over his enemy's head, he instantly flies, while the Secutor pursues, striving to

kill him before his net is prepared for a second trial.

Sometimes they fought in armour, with helmets on their heads; and at other times were dressed only in short tunics, confined around the waist

by girdles of bronze. On all occasions the conflict was for life or death. We will suppose two gladiators engaged in the Colosseum. They are both trained to the profession, and the prize is a sum of money. are armed with swords and bucklers; ferocity and hardihood have taken the place of generous valour. It is no mock fight; blood must flow, and one must inevitably perish, unless rescued by the will of the emperor, or the mercy of the people; the last, unless under peculiar circumstances, is rarely granted to the defeated man. The younger combatant triumphs; the elder receives a wound, and by dropping his arms declares himself vanquished. The general shout, hoc habet! he has it! subsides, and the elder man raises his eyes, as customary, to the benches above. His fate depends upon the will of the spectators; if they elevate their thumbs, the sign of clemency, he is to be spared; if they depress them—he dies! The young gladiator stands with his sword ready to do the bidding of the assembly, and the vanquished calmly awaits his doom. The unpropitious sign is given—the sword descends, and the veteran meets death with astonishing firmness.

Such were the cruel and bloody sports of the Amphitheatre, and no diversions, perhaps, in which the Romans indulged, contributed in so great a degree to demoralise the mass of the people. Yet the barbarous amusements found abettors even among the honourable and thinking men of the period, some of whom were of opinion that the gladiatorial combats went far to keep up the martial spirit which, on the extinction of the Republic, threatened fast to decline. We cannot, however, but think that these exhibitions, while they shocked humanity, were even a disgrace to the profligate and degenerate age in which they occurred.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

A LESSON TO PRIDE.

Sad is the legend's truth.

Some evenings ago, while wandering through one of the suburbs of our metropolis with a familiar friend, indulging in a sort of desultory, ill-sustained conversation, his satirical powers were called into play by a remark that I made upon "the peculiar physiognomy of some houses." This, he declared, "was about as barefaced an absurdity as he had ever listened to," and asked, "if, instead of him, I had had 'Le Diable Boiteux' for my companion, into which I should have chosen to peep?"

"There," he continued, laughingly, as we passed one—a somewhat low, long, two-storied dwelling, freshly painted and whitewashed, with an advertisement in one or more of the windows that it was "To be let"—"what do you say to that house? Do you call it demure-looking, methodistical—what?" He seemed greatly amused when, in defiance even of his banter, I answered,

"No! I call it haunted."

"Haunted!" he exclaimed; "better and better. Upon my word, with

all your queer fancies, and your courage in expressing them, you do make a tolerable evening's companion! Now, in the name of all that's romantic, how can you invest that vulgar, barn-like looking dwelling with so much interest as to fancy that a ghost would deign to walk there?"

"My friend," I replied, "I did not assert that a ghost walks there; I

merely said that it is a haunted house."

"A nice distinction, truly," he cried. "Now, pray let me inquire what is the difference between a house being haunted and having ghosts

in it? I confess that I can see none."

"To my apprehension the difference is manifest," I answered; "for a house may be haunted by strange memories or painful associations, that may acquire for it an evil repute, the more especially if they be of such a character as to appeal to the imagination of the vulgar, and cause it to be regarded with superstitious dread. In bygone days that house had quite a different aspect. I recollect it when the passion-flower, white jasmine, and woodbine embowered the windows; when a thick hedge of eglantine begirt its little parterre, and when a luxuriant bloom of roses struggled through the lush vegetation that almost choked their growth; then everything spoke of a sweet spirit departed—a presiding genius withdrawn."

"Or, in other words, not to be quite so high flown," said my friend, "you mean that the place was all choked up with weeds, and that then, as now, it was 'To be let.' My dear fellow, you idealise too much; is not that the simple truth?"

"And you 'realise,' as 'Brother Jonathan' says, too much," I answered; that is, you reduce certain objects of interest to a sharp angular

reality, that-"

"At it again," cried he, laughing; "how incorrigible you are; even poor simple reality you cannot treat as the dull, solid thing it is, but give it both sharpness and angularity; recollect, too, in the words of your favourite poet, I am

A lawyer, sallow and cold,

and live by the sharpness of my wit, if you will, and the counterbalancing roundness of my gains; believe me, if you cramped your genius to the study of Coke and Lyttleton, and permitted your pen no more discursive liberty than might be found consistent with the dignity of parchment and pink tape, you would find your fancy very sensibly tamed, and be no longer capable of flights erratic to the shadowy regions of cloudland. Still my curiosity is piqued, and I am anxious to know the tale of your haunted house, because, realist as I am, I never should have dreamed of selecting any house so common-place looking as that for ghostly occupation."

"And yet, in how many more common-place looking dwellings than that," I remarked, "have high hopes been formed, and fond hearts

broken?"

"And jests been cracked, and clothes been washed, and children whipped," added my friend, sarcastically. Then he fell a musing, and, after a pause of some minutes' duration, while his expression gradually softened, he extended his hand, and grasping mine, exclaimed, "My dear

fellow, you understand me, you are not angry with me for my banter? Twilight has deepened, the stars are twinkling in most inviting fashion, and now, pray, just humour me, and humour yourself also, by telling me

the story of your haunted house."

"Well, then," I exclaimed, "though you scarce deserve it, sceptic as you are, yet, to humour you, and to humour myself also, I shall tell you the story of my 'Haunted House,' as mine you seem determined to have it; but remember, the story is not mine. It is, I believe, authentic. The friend of whom I heard it was acquainted with the persons to whom the story refers, and whose name, for obvious reasons, I have never heard, therefore cannot on that point satisfy your curiosity; but, some fifteen years since, there were several families in the neighbourhood who could attest the truth of the tragic history that illustrates this house, so long has it been since I was made acquainted with it."

"What! love, blood, and murder?" said my friend.

"The former, if you will," I answered, "but neither of the latter; unrelieved penury, gaunt famine, and horrid death."

THE STORY.

Some fifteen years ago, the appearance of this house attracted my observation: it was then in the neglected state I have previously described. The sweet scents floating from its untended garden, invited attention to its desolation; intruding creepers nearly veiled the windows, most of which were broken; the remaining panes were obscured by a thick coating of dust and cobwebs, the roof was in most places bare, the doors and shutters cracked from want of paint.

"That place seems to have been once pretty," I observed, as we passed, to a friend since dead, who was walking with me at the time; "what a

pity it should have been suffered to fall into decay."

"Yes," said my friend, "I remember when it was indeed an exceedingly pretty place, so neat and cheerful-looking, the air of refinement diffused about it too, made it evident that it was occupied by persons of superior and cultivated taste. But nobody will live there now; it could be purchased for the merest trifle—still, there it lies unoccupied."

"No wonder," I said, "when in such a condition."

"The owner," replied my friend, "has repeatedly offered to put it into thorough repair, and to let it upon the most advantageous terms, but he cannot succeed in getting a tenant. Nobody will live there: the place is said to be haunted. It was the scene of great love, great pride, great poverty, great endurance. When many years younger than I am now, I remember to have seen a delicate lady, whose high-bred air proclaimed her birth, walk feebly into that little court, supported by a man of fine, even noble presence on one side, and a lovely girl, in the rich bloom of eighteen, upon the other. Though in so populous a neighbourhood, they lived aloof from all society, and appeared to find in themselves alone all the intercourse they needed; every little overture to acquaintance, which native kindliness of heart on the part of their neighbours dictated, was repulsed by a consistent coldness, that most effectually checked in the bud the faintest approach to familiarity; so they lived unfriended and unapproachable—forgetful or neglectful of that independence by which the human chain is so effectually and harmoniously linked in the happy

bond of universal brotherhood. They were people of cultivated taste and elegant accomplishments; often of an evening the steps of the passer-by had been arrested by the delicious voice of song and the skilful accompaniment of several instruments, touched with artistic excellence, till the elder lady's health began visibly to decline, and then all was hushed and melancholy. At this time, the young girl and her father but seldom left the house together, dedicating all their leisure to the beloved and amiable invalid, who was mother to this girl, and who, at an unusually early age, in open defiance of parental injunctions, on both sides, united herself to Mr. H-, his family being equally adverse to the connexion. Why this hostility existed I know not; nor did I ever inquire, suffice it to say, the objections raised were insuperable. Owing to having married under those painful circumstances, Mr. H—— was by his father deprived of the income he had hitherto enjoyed, being then solely dependent upon his bounty. A younger son, without a profession to aid him in his struggle with adversity; his wife, also, was by her relations stripped of all portion, save that house and a life annuity, willed to her by an aunt while she was yet in her childhood, and of which she could not be dispos-Under such adverse auspices they enterrd life, the heavy penalty of disobedience casting its gloomy shadow athwart their path, while their hearts rankled bitterly against the parents who had reared them in habits of luxury, and then because of having yielded to the suggestions of their own (hereditary) strong will, had laid them aside, and consigned them to poverty. They made no effort to reconciliation, till their child, the young girl to whom I have alluded, was born in the second year of their marriage; when, buoyed by the hope of restoring her to the position they had themselves forfeited, true to the instinct of parental tenderness, they sued for pardon with humble entreaty—but in vain—their unnatural parents, forgetful of that divinest attribute, forgiveness, hardened their hearts against their erring children, and ruthlessly drove them from their doors with taunts and scoffing.

"Forth, from that hour, to suffice to themselves alone, became their unhappy determination. With the developed growth of their babe—to whom they were most tenderly attached—from the desire to improve their condition; in her the mother possessed a sweet and engaging companion for solitary hours, and the father resolved upon increasing their means by obtaining more employment for which he should receive pecuniary remuneration. To both of these young people, with their false and peculiar ideas, this course was at first repulsive, but, by being frequently entertained, it became less revolting, and the more they considered it, the easier it seemed, till his mind having become familiarised with the project, Mr. H—— determined to exert himself, so as to insure its attainment; and, at length, after many heartburnings resulting from wounded pride and frequent disappointments, he was engaged as clerk in

a counting-house, at a salary of 1001. per annum.

"Daily his fair wife walked down with him to the end of their little garden, and at the gate received his parting kiss; daily she met him there again at the accustomed hour of his return, their child in her arms, and kiss of welcome ever on her lips, and tender words to compensate for foregone toil. So they lived for years—observed, obscure, and blameless—till their girl grew up to lovely womanhood, with the most tender attachment to her parents, and unhappily, the most resentful feelings

for their wrongs, in which they had unwisely instructed her, she inherited all their strength of will, and the same passionate susceptibility

by which they were characterised.

"When the girl had attained her twenty-fourth year, her mother died; that was, indeed, a severe blow! and the poverty which had impended for twenty-six years now came with a single stride—true, there was a little secret hoard found on the death of Mrs. H., previously unsuspected, and her father was still in receipt of his salary, but for how long?

"Without any abiding sense of religion to sustain him, the grief of Mr. — on his wife's death was intolerable: it could not be described scarcely imagined. A man of strong affections and indomitable will, he mourned as one without hope, and would not be comforted; he forgot that there had been mutual sacrifice—thought only of the position which she, for his sake, had forfeited—of the privations she had so unrepiningly endured—yea! and he forgot her child, whom she had loved with such tender excess; and he determined, that he might duly honour her insensible remains, to spend the little secret hoard that with pious care and rigid self-denial she had treasured up for his and their daughter's use. He caused, as in mockery, her fair cold limbs to be arrayed in costly grave clothes, her still form to be laid in emblazoned coffin, which, by solemn torch-light, was borne in a stately hearse, drawn by six coalblack borses, to his own ancestral tomb, followed alone by the mourning coach containing him and his stricken child, in whose presence she was consigned to her last resting-place.

"But, though his relations denied him not the poor satisfaction of laying his faithful dead within the family sepulchre, still they made no overtures towards reconciliation with the afflicted mourners. It is possible that, for the sake of the child of her whom they had rejected in life, he had made this solemn occasion the opportunity of bringing her lovely offspring to their notice; if so, he was most signally disappointed, for no token of recognition was given, and with the form of his beloved partner he laid his last hopes of forgiveness in the grave; bruised in spirit, and sorrowing in heart, he returned with his daughter to their

desolated home.

"Smarting beneath the keen sense of intolerable bereavement, absolutely inconsolable, he would sit for hours in moody dejection, silent, and abstracted—start at the faintest noise—became daily more irritable—a prey to the most intense anguish; his nervous system was irrecoverably shaken, and he turned from the gentle consolations of his daughter, if not disgusted, certainly with such marked and undisguised impatience as bitterly aggravated the grief, against which, the better to soothe and

cheer him, she so resolutely struggled.

"A note of inquiry from the head of the firm, in whose counting-house he was employed, in some measure restored him to himself. More than ever strong became the urgent necessity for exertion; his salary as clerk was all that remained to him. The common necessaries of life were to be provided for, and the means of making that provision almost completely exhausted; he felt that, to support nature, he must battle for the means, and determined accordingly immediately to resume his employment; he therefore returned to the office the morning subsequent to the receipt of the note I have already mentioned, and recommenced its arduous duties.

"On every face he might have read the kindly expression of sympathy, for, though Mr. H—— had always treated his brother clerks with the cold reserve of distant politeness, yet his fine presence, courtly breeding, and high sense of integrity, insensibly attracted them towards him. He had never, by affecting an air of superiority, wounded their self-love, therefore they all tacitly acknowledged him, as he really was, their superior, and, despite of his frigid demeanour, he had from his unfailing politeness made himself most popular in the office; but, sensitively shrinking from all notice, he passed on to his desk with the same courteous bow, and even more constrained air than formerly, and, as he prepared to enter upon the customary duties of the day, they looked upon him commiseratingly as they remarked to each other, 'How terribly poor H—— was cut up by the calamity he had sustained.'

"Ten days of absence had thrown his accounts considerably into arrear; and those kind-hearted men felt really glad that such attention to his books was demanded of him that must, as a natural consequence, distract his mind from the grief by which he appeared overwhelmed. A week of sedulous attention found him still the same—the earliest in the office, and the latest lingerer there, long after it had closed—pale, emaciated, haggard—poring over these involved and, as it

seemed to him, endless accounts.

"With his poor daughter the hours wore heavily during his absence. Alone, and unfriended; not one human being to whom she could outpour her sorrow; the sense of isolation, the crushing weight of calamity pressing heavily upon her, and predisposing her mind to entertain doleful forebodings of yet sterner adversity. Nor was her presence vain; too clearly she noted the fatal change in her only remaining parent—sleepless nights and hopeless days, and rejected nourishment, told but too surely upon his exhausted frame, preparing her, as it were, for the terrible blow that was yet impending swiftly to descend upon that devoted and heroic woman.

"One day, about a month after his return to the counting-house, Mr. H—— remained much later than usual in the office with a fellow clerk; there had been an extraordinary press of business that day—bills of lading to be filled, invoices made out, and accounts to be balanced: being both men of punctual and exact habits, they continued busily engaged after the departure of the other clerks balancing their accounts.

"'Thank goodness, my day's work is over at last—and time for it too,' exclaimed Mr. Wilmot (the other occupant of the office) somewhat briskly, as he complacently replaced his ledgers and papers in his desk, and too! off his spectacles—but, looking at Mr. H——, who still sat opposite him, pen in hand, there was such a blank expression of perplexity in his countenance, wan and haggard—such an air of langour and debility diffused over his entire person, as riveted the attention of his kind-hearted companion, who, replacing his spectacles, looked at him more intently, and exclaimed—almost involuntarily, with an excited intention—

"'Bless my soul, Mr. H——, is anything the matter with you?"

"A few broken inarticulate sounds were the only reply; he went over to him kindly, readily offering assistance, and glancing downwards upon the outspread paper on which Mr. H——'s gaze was riveted, he raised

his hands with a gesture of surprise and consternation! All was confusion—the same figures, over and over again, frequently repeated—the same unsatisfactory results. Poor Mr. H——! his intellects were suspended—sleepless nights, wearying grief, insufficient food, and intricate arithmetic calculation had done their worst—paralysis of the brain had supervened, and there he sat, pallid, woe-begone, confused, and unconscious.

"With benevolent solicitude Mr. Wilmot removed him from the office unresisting, and, having assisted him into a cab, accompanied him to his home, where, as gently as he could, he broke the fearful tidings of his illness to his afflicted daughter, and confided him to her

tender care.

"This was Mr. Wilmot's first and only interview with Miss H-, and the extraordinary firmness with which she received his painful com-

munication filled him with admiration and respect.

"And now, for her, commenced a series of sorrow and suffering almost unexampled, if not altogether without parallel. While she, in her person, exhibited the highest attributes of female excellence, love, obedience, self-denial, fortitude, amounting even to heroism—all but religion, in this she was different, against its soothing influences her heart was closed by the recollection of her parents' wrongs (the bitter fruit of their own disobedience), and it may be, also, by the inherent curse of pride which, being hers, both by temper and inheritance, was unconsciously fostered and developed by her peculiar education, unusual position, and the fact of her having been cut off from all intercourse with her fellows by that spirit of pretension in her parents, who she, in the strength of her filial affection,

looked up to as the most perfect models of all human perfection.

"For a year his daughter supported him by the exercise of those accomplishments in which she excelled; her father had never sufficiently recovered to resume his employment, nor did the physician, who had attended him in the early stages of his malady, hold out any encouraging prospect of ultimate restoration: his faculties were hopelessly impaired, although, at one moment, capable of exercising his judgment soundly as ever, at the next he was utterly incompetent to form an opinion upon the most trivial subject. But a curious feature in his case was the pertinacity with which he brooded over the remembrance of his expulsion from his family; he was still in his prime, not fifty years old, his father still living, an aged, implacable, and relentless man, rich in this world's wealth; his daughter spoke of making an appeal herself to her grandsire in behalf of her unfortunate parent, or even to his brothers, but he would listen to no such suggestion; nay, he exacted a solemn promise from her, that she should never stoop to such a course, no matter how disastrously they might be situated. Cheerlessly the winter set in, bleak and stormy, and with it the work of desolation progressed, the ruthless winds, as sweeping past, seemed to expend their utmost excess of fury on that devoted house; in many places the slates were stripped from the roof, which the snow and rain penetrated, while the diminished means of the unhappy occupants rendered it impossible to repair the injury without; from within, almost every article that denoted better days had vanished, - having parted with them, one by one, at about a third of their original value, for the purpose of supplying the urgent necessities of daily existence. Fortunately for himself her poor father missed not those things so prized by him for the tender memories they recalled; he was now completely an invalid, unable to leave his bed. With pious care she tended him, working cheerfully the while, embroidering delicate cambric, or illustrating costly albums for the wealthy; but soon these means failed her also, for he grew fitful, wayward, and restless, demanding perpetual attention; and those elegant accomplishments in which she so much excelled, and the exercise of which almost dignified their poverty, were laid aside for the more homely employment of her skill in darning stockings, or repairing old clothes.

"Still his true-hearted daughter worked, if not cheerfully, at least resolutely; one expression of endearment from him, her heart's best guerdon, performing those revolting works for a morsel of bread, or a piece of broken meat, for she could not leave her poor father sufficiently long to enable her to purchase food for him, therefore gladly did she

receive such things in repayment of her time and labour.

"Again came winter, cold and nipping. No fire in the empty grate to supply needful heat to the miserable invalid; insufficient clothing to wrap her own attenuated limbs—no means of purchasing either—no means of procuring artificial light, to dispel the dreariness of the long hours of darkness, rendered yet more dreary by the constant and querulous complaints of the now rapidly-sinking invalid, her last tie to earth—her beloved father—her solitary friend!

"Who can imagine her agony? No respite ever—toil, starvation, hopeless watching. Again and again the same terrible suggestion of a despairing mind, self-destruction, presenting itself with fearful distinctness—again and again resolutely combated, and abandoned with a shudder. Oh! how she sighed for the rest of the grave; and how she

still, with a brave heart, evermore battled with adversity.

"No wonder that her reason tottered!

"But the continued demand for activity preserved its balance. No work, no food; and by her exertions alone could the wants of her unhappy and famishing parent be supplied. He, at times, had glimmerings of consciousness which only served to render his condition yet more heart-rending, for his mind constantly recurred, with sorrowful repining, to the luxury of his boyhood's home; towards the close of his life this was of

more frequent occurrence and longer duration.

"There were times, too, when, abandoning himself to unutterable despondency, he would break upon the terrible silence of the darkness, in which they were enveloped during the hours of night, by giving utterance to strange ghastly fancies, and piteous lamentations at their hapless lot; revert to the horror he had felt, as a child, upon witnessing a pauper's funeral; speak of the manner in which he had celebrated his wife's obsequies, and enjoin his daughter never to seek for him the poor charity of a parish coffin, but, above all, not to sue for help from his family, but ever to preserve her independence, nor permit want to transform her into a beggar. And so she promised him it should never be, courageously repressing every symptom of emotion, the more effectually to soothe his irritability.

"Christmas drew nigh, and, on the day preceding the festival, she gav her poor father their last morsel of food, which he ate with extraordinary avidity. She carefully smoothed his tumbled bed, kissed him tenderly, folded up some finished work, and told him she should speedily return with a fresh supply of nourishment, her eyes glittered, and she smiled a ghastly smile of encouragement; for, as she spoke, at that very moment the lust for food raged fierce and unappeased within her, for the past eighteen hours no aliment had passed her lips. Invigorated by his recent meal, her father replied by a hearty benediction, and, as he bade 'God

bless her!' she set out upon her errand.

"The wind blew in fitful gusts, the heavy rain saturated her scanty and insufficient garments as she hurried onwards; almost fainting, she arrived at the house of the lady by whom she had been employed to work, she received, accompanied by many praises for the neatness of its execution, in compensation an ample supply of wholesome and nutritious food, to which was added a few dainties, for, from one of this lady's servants, who had originally lived with poor Mrs. H——, she had heard of the destitute condition of father and daughter, and, anxious to alleviate their sufferings, had, from the instant she became acquainted with their wretched circumstances, kept Miss H——- almost entirely employed.

"In faltering accents Miss H—— expressed her gratitude to her benefactress, and, without stopping to satisfy the intolerable cravings of the bitter, burning hunger by which she was consumed, she hastened home with a more hopeful heart than she had known since the first hour of her calamity. Almost joyfully she entered her father's room, eager to tell him of her success, and to present him with the delicacies to which he

had been so long a stranger.

"But why that sudden pause—that stare of horror—that scream of agony?

"He was dead!

"Turn we from this melancholy scene to one of fairer promise:

"In a richly-furnished library sat an old man erect, beneath the weight of eighty-seven years, he reclined not in the luxurious depths of the easy-chair, covered in crimson velvet, and inviting to repose, which he occupied; he was of severe, yet venerable aspect, his port stern and commanding; the characteristic haughtiness of his features was now softened by an expression of tender affection as he folded a little girl, of some seven years, to his bosom, her bright golden hair mingling its glossy ringlets with the silvery locks of her grandsire, for such was their relationship. An angelic softness pervaded the entire bearing of the child, and the old man looked on her with the fondest admiration as he spoke to her of the anticipated treasures of the Christmas-tree.

"'What a wet day, grandpa, for the poor people that are to come here for their allowance of Christmas beef and blankets; I wish it would not

rain so!' said the child.

"He smiled upon her benevolently as she spoke.

"'When I see the poor creatures coming up the avenue,' she continued, 'or wet and hungry-looking, I feel quite sorry for them; how comfortable we are here together; pictures, and books, and heavy curtains, to keep the cold air out; a bright fire to warm us, blazing so merrily!—sometimes, when I see poor shivering creatures, with scarce any clothes to ke them warm, I think how strange it must seem to them, that the rich win allow fine curtains to hang from their windows, which can never feel the cold, while they do not give them any clothes. I know, if I were big, I shouldn't have it this way!"

"'God bless you, my darling! you are a good child,' said the old man, tenderly.

"The face of the little girl flushed crimson.

"'Grandpa, forgive me!' she said, suddenly. 'I am not good—you will not think me good; I am sure I do not deserve to be thought good! Oh, I am afraid you will be so angry with me!'

"'You have not, I hope, disobeyed me,' said the old man, sternly.

'You know, I never forgive disobedience!'

"'Never forgive?' cried she, recoiling from him. 'But I have not disobeyed you; stay, and I shall show you what I have done.' She slid from his knees to the floor, and approaching the library table, opened a drawer, and drew forth the miniature of a youth—it was set in pearls, and had the glass broken.

"'See here, grandpa,' she said, softly, as she returned with faltering step; 'before you came into the library, I found this in the back of that drawer, under such a heap of papers! I took it out—I was playing with it—it fell upon the hearth—the glass was broken in the fall, and the pic-

ture itself cracked, see there-across the face.'

"The old man took it from her, looked at it for a moment, and hastily

put it from him. More and more stern grew his countenance.

"'Pooh! it is of no consequence, child,' he exclaimed, somewhat angrily. 'But now, mark the fatal effects of disobedience, and let this picture be a lesson to you. It is the picture of your Uncle Reginald, painted when he was a boy, he grew up to be a man; and when your mother was a little girl, not bigger than you are now, he disobeyed me—and I have never seen him—never forgiven him since——'

"It was the father of Mr. H-- who spoke.

"For an instant, the child looked upon him with an expression of horror, and lifting her innocent eyes, full of reproach, to his face, she exclaimed in an awe-inspiring tone,

" 'Then, if you do not forgive him on this blessed Christmas-eve, grand-

papa, God never will forgive you!'

"There was an earnestness—a holy solemnity in her voice, that went straight to his heart—it was as if an angel had spoken.

"A long silence ensued, broken alone by the hard sobs of the child, as-

tounded at her grandfather's obduracy.

"The old man's head was bowed upon his hands, which rested on an adjacent writing-table; the bright warmth of the firelight, reflected from the costly hangings of crimson cloth, cast a ruddy glow upon his scant hair, that flowed in silvery waves nearly to his shoulders—a strange contest was in his mind.

"'Death, and after death—the judgment,' he muttered, hoarsely. 'Come hither, child,' said the old man, much moved; 'you have prevailed—as

I hope for forgiveness myself, so shall he be forgiven.'

"'But this day—this very day! dear, dear grandpa!' cried the little girl, springing to his arms, and kissing him tenderly.

"'This hour!' said the old man, in reply.

"'But where is he—where?' she inquired, eagerly. 'He must be so unhappy to have you angry with him so long. Did he never ask you to forgive him? You must send for him at once—my poor, poor uncle!'

"'We must first find out where he is,' said her grandsire, in reply; 'and then, we shall send for him.'

"'Not know where your own son is!' exclaimed the child, in a tone of

wonder and concern.

"And while this cherub child persuasively pleaded for her unfortunate uncle, Miss H—— composed his stark and rigid limbs; for then he was beyond the reach of mortal comfort, where 'the wicked cease from troubling,

and the weary are at rest !'

"In appalling gloom the night closed in upon this solitary woman, in darkness, with her dead; its mournful silence broken alone by the eddying wind, as whistling shrilly, it rushed down the narrow stairs, rattling the ill-fastened windows, and slamming the open doors; the empty chambers re-echoing the sharp, hollow sound, with startling effect upon the agonised With what a sickening sense of desolation did the first light of the Christmas morning break upon her! How dreary—how horrible her condition, as its pale rays rested upon the wan and shrunken form of him who had given her being—she shuddered, for she remembered her promise, that he should have no pauper funeral, that she never should descend to begging. Oh, how faithfully, yet how fearfully, was her promise observed! And all through the heavy hours of that melancholy day, by singular fascination, which she was powerless to resist, her gaze was riveted upon her dead parent, her dilated eyes, with tender steadfastness, perusing every lineament—the gathering twilight, the gloomy night, found her still beside him, in the accustomed place, mute, tearless, stricken in heart, and tortured in spirit, helpless, and hopeless—alone in the world.

"Her slumbering senses woke up with fearful acuteness, and her imagination, ever sensitive, impressible, and powerful, created the most terrific phantoms in the impenetrable gloom. She scarce ventured to breathe. On the road without were sounds of merriment; carriages whirling past in rapid succession; from the opposite houses gay music issuing forth in joyous cadence, which spoke of festive meeting; tokens of social mirth

all around her—and with her, what anguish!

"On every Christmas-day it was usual for all the members of his family to assemble at the house of her grandfather; on this particular day they had met, in accordance with the custom of foregone anniversaries—one alone was absent, his only daughter, mother to the little girl I have mentioned, and she had, some months previously, accompanied her husband to one of our Indian Presidencies, where he had been appointed to a bishopric, leaving her child to the care of her father.

"The old man now sat at the head of his festive board, his little grand-daughter by his side; his sons, their wives and children, with remoter relatives, all around the table, glittering with costly plate and transparent

crystal; the rich dessert was spread, and the wine outpoured.

"'Here,' said the old man, with much emotion, as he raised his glass—'here is to the absent, my beloved daughter and her good husband—and now, my little woman!' said he, smiling fondly upon the child by his side; 'according to the established rule, it is your duty to return thanks for this toast.'

"'First fill your glass again, grandpa!" she exclaimed, 'everybody fill their glasses; now, here is to the absent," she said, slowly, and distinctly—'my Uncle Reginald!"

"All at table started—it was the first time for years that that name had been spoken in their presence, and it was with an uneasy sensation that they drank the toast; and then, with husky voice and subdued mien, her grandfather told the story of the broken picture, and how childish reasoning had prevailed.

"Alas! alas! why so long implacable!

"Now, when search was unavailing, two of Reginald's brothers volunteered to seek him out.

"Days were passed in fruitless inquiry; three weeks sped, and still no clue to him. While daily did the fair child question her grandfather as to what had become of him. Why he did not appear? Why he did not

answer the newspaper advertisements?

"Meantime, the sufferings of Miss H—— were excruciating; having but her own need to provide for, she was careless to work; the tension of her nerves was extreme; and her untasked and inexhaustible energy preyed

upon her ruthlessly.

"Owing to having accustomed herself, during the latter months of her unfortunate parent's lifetime, to scanty fare, the supply of food she had received on Christmas-eve lasted long; but, at the end of the third week, it was nearly consumed, one meal was only remaining; again the necessity for exertion presented itself, and again it was met with constancy.

"She commenced the work that she had received on that fatal day, and pursued it assiduously. As she sat at the window, plying her swift needle, her attention was attracted to a morsel of torn paper that was lifted by the blast which raged without, and ever and anon was blown against the window, or amid the leaves of the creepers that veiled it; having become of late painfully irritable, and easily excited, the sight of this fluttering paper was a matter of considerable annoyance. And hastily opening the window for the purpose of snatching it from a twig, on which it had for a moment rested, that she might destroy it, she was prevented by its being blown straight into her face, by the rush of wind through the raised sash. It was a piece of newspaper, torn and soiled, and as she was in the act of tearing it, her father's name caught her eye! She paused, examined it, and, trembling and astonished, read:

"'If Reginald H- will apply at the office of this paper, he will hear

of something to his advantage.

"The name and date of the paper was also upon it.

"Now, what was to be done? How make the application? Who, that in former days had known him, would believe that she was the daughter

of Reginald H--?

"Powerfully agitated, she almost dared to hope—she promptly determined to apply by letter; but to procure paper, pens, and ink, was necessary, and how were they to be obtained? She could not beg for them—so had she promised; she must work for them, they could be earned. Vigorously in hope, she plied her rapid needle; her mind preparing itself for the sequence that ensued.

"A simple incident led to her discovery.

"I have said that the daughter of her grandfather had accompanied her husband to one of our Indian presidencies; the firm in whose office Mr. H—— had served was extensively engaged in the East India trade, and

to their care had been consigned a box of Indian rarities for her beloved child; her eldest brother being in town at the time of its arrival, went to the counting-house, and asking to see one of the clerks, inquired at what time it could be delivered? The person of whom he made this inquiry was no other than Mr. Wilmot, who, looking at him attentively for some minutes, exclaimed,

"'Bless my soul, Mr. H—, how well you do look; quite a new man, sir! Why you look ten years younger than when you arrived in this

office.'

"'Sir!' cried the other, haughtily; 'there must be some mistake, I never had that honour.'

"'Oh, indeed! I beg pardon, sir—beg pardon,' said Mr. Wilmot, with an air of incredulity; 'there now, all right; be so good as to place your signature in that spot.'

"And in a clear, bold hand he wrote Hildebrand H--, observing, as

if struck by some sudden thought,

"'You said something of my having served in this office, sir; may I ask, now that you have seen my name, of whom it is that I remind you?"

"'Certainly, sir, certainly,' said Mr. Wilmot, rubbing his hands, and without offence, I hope. A gentleman of your own name, as like you as two peas, sir, Mr. Reginald H——!'

"'Reginald H——!" he exclaimed, eagerly; 'did he really serve here! Perhaps you can give me his address, I have been trying to find

him out, but unsuccessfully.'

- "'Why two years ago,' said Mr. Wilmot, in reply, 'he occupied a house just on the outskirts of the city, at a place called Nettlethorperoad—you cannot miss it—long, low house, creepers in front, little flower-garden, green gate; let me see—its name—dear, dear, how forgetful!—but never mind, it is on the pillars—Oh, yes! Eglantine, that's it.'
- "'I thank you, sir,' said Mr. Hildebrand H——, cautiously, as he took down the address, and passing from the office, with a stately bow to Mr. Wilmot, he stepped into his chariot, where his wife sat waiting his return; he ordered it to be driven to the place indicated, telling her, as they pursued their way, of the little scene in the office between him and Mr. Wilmot.
- "A drive of about half an hour's duration brought them to Nettlethorperoad; 'We must be near it now,' he exclaimed, as he read the name on a direction-post. 'A long, low house, covered with creepers,' he repeated, in a disappointed tone; 'why here, in all the entire neighbour-hood, is only one that answers the description, but surely that cannot be it, who would inhabit such a hovel?'

" 'Oh, see, its name is on one of the pillars of the gate,' interrupted

his wife, 'Eglantine! What a dreary looking place!'

"Well might she call it so! Most of the window-panes were broken; those that remained entire were covered with cobwebs, and stained with dust and rain. Destitute of latch, the little iron-gate, admitting to the garden, swung backward and forward on its hinges with a dull, heavy sound—the sport of every blast. While the cheerless aspect of the tattered roof added to its desolation.

"A child was passing—'Tell me, my little man,' said Mr. Hildebrand H—, 'does anybody live there?' pointing to the house as he made the inquiry.

"'Yes, sir,' said the boy, hurrying on, 'Mr. H -- and the young

lady lives there-his daughter, sir.'

" He shuddered as he listened.

"And now, from the windows of the adjacent houses, might be seen inquisitive neighbours, examining with surprised looks the stately equi-

page that stood outside the dilapidated house.

"He descended from the carriage, crossed the little court to the halldoor-it was ajar; he struck it with his cane, received no answer; called out, 'Is any one within?' paused, and listened-fancied he heard startling sounds of hysteric laughter, hollow and unearthly-the mellifluous notes of a female voice, finely modulated, chanting the 'Miserere.' He passed the threshold, entered the hall—the walls, dark and humid, were reeking with green mouldy damp; the rotten flooring creaked beneath his feet; up the crazy stair he mounted, till he arrived at the place from whence the sounds had issued-a sickening sense oppressing him, that instinctive consciousness of death which repels the living, and ' lifts the hair from the scalp to the ankle!' A terrible scene presented itself: poor Miss H- seated on her miserable bed, busily employed at her needle, singing and laughing alternately; she scarce resembled a living being, her form was so shrivelled and attenuated; the bones of her face distinct and prominent, the division of her teeth shown through her wasted lips, once so round and mellow; in short, she was a living skele-So intent was she upon her task she did not for some moments observe her visitor, who gazed on her in horror. Full of the resplendent lustre resulting from intense excitement, her large eyes were glittering from their sunken depths, and illuminating her emaciated visage with preternatural light, while a vivid lustre burnt upon her worn cheek. Suddenly pausing in her work, she raised those luminous eyes to her uncle's face, and, for a single instant, fastening upon him a piercing, yet startling, regard, she sprang towards him, wrapped him in a strict embrace, exclaiming,

"' Oh, my God! it was then, after all, a hideous dream, and you live

yet, my father!' sunk to his feet in deadly swoon.

"Mr. Hildebrand H—— raised her gently, laid her on her wretched bed, nor doubted her identity as his very niece. All his best sympathies aroused, anxious to repair the injury from which she too long had innocently suffered, he summoned his wife to her aid, and when she returned to consciousness, kind and benevolent faces met her view—soft and gentle voices asserted the rights of consanguinity. In soothing accents they bade her be of good cheer, explained their relationship, and offered her the comforts of her grandsire's home, his tender and repentant love, his best forgiveness for her father.

"Fast flowed her unspent tears, bringing soft refreshment to her fevered heart; as, choking with emotion too deep for utterance, she

sobbed forth:

"'Then my father shall have Christian burial—no pauper funeral! There, beneath your feet, he rests,' she exclaimed, passionately, 'under

yon flag; pointing to the hearthstone as she spoke. 'I laid him there myself ten days ago!'

"They recoiled in horror.

"Oh, what a brave heart! What wonderful endurance!

"They wrapped her in some superfluous clothing belonging to Mrs. H—, and which was in the carriage at the door, and from that house, haunted by such harrowing memories, she was borne in the arms of her uncle, and gently placed in the waiting chariot; by him she was presented to her aged grandsire, who, with streaming eyes and quivering lips, entreated her forgiveness for afflictions so unmerited in her person as those she had undergone. From the little girl, who had been instrumental in bringing her to the notice of her family, she acquired lessons of simple wisdom, which led her to look beyond herself for strength and consolation to the inexhaustible fountain of Divine Love!

"Sorrowful and repentant, her aged grandsire followed the remains of her unfortunate parent to the family sepulchre, where, in emblazoned coffin, he was laid beside all that was mortal of his idolised partner. Great had been his suffering in life, but great also his offence; violated duty is ever fecund to bring forth sorrow. Nor can the curse for disobedience, denounced against our first parents, be braved with impunity.

"An all-wise Providence, powerful alike to sustain and to govern the universe, can alone wield with effect the Avenger's sword, which, when presumptuous man assays to direct its fiery blade, flames back upon his nerveless arm, inflicting deadly scathe. The divine oracle proclaims vengeance as belonging to the Deity, it is therefore unsuited to a puny mortal. Too surely—even in this world—are the sins of the father visited upon the children.

"Miss H--, the innocent victim of her parent's wrong, grew old in grief before she was snatched from the abysm of wretchedness in which

she was plunged by tardy retribution.

"As in her case, it is not always that virtue meets its recompense; still it ever 'brings its own exceeding great reward,' in the consciousness of not having 'wearied in well doing.' To conclude with a quotation which should never be heard in vain:

To err, is human-to forgive, divine.

"Be therefore the heavenly attribute of forgiveness carefully fostered in every human breast—yea! though one brother's offences against us amount to the sum of seventy times seven!"

ISABEL MILFORD.

AN OLD BACHELOR'S STORY.

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

III.

FATHER DONALD having long determined that the old bachelor was a "troublesome fellow," had at length, rather authoritatively, persuaded Lady Milford to order him to discontinue his visits, and forbid any correspondence with her daughter; and I now confess with regret, that feeling a little piqued at this treatment from her ladyship, I but too readily acquiesced in her wishes. Ernest Montague had frequently written to me since his arrival in France, and enclosed many letters for Isabel, which had always been duly forwarded, and I was greatly provoked at never receiving replies for transmissions to my young friend. The revelations of after-years proved that the poor girl never received any of these billet-doux. A Jesuit will outwit most people, and it is certain he outwitted me at that period of our acquaintance.

Ernest was laying dangerously ill at Boulogne, having caught the small-pox while crossing in the packet; his tutor proved to be a worth-less, selfish wretch, for he took fright at the contagious disease, and immediately resigned his situation, leaving the dear boy to the tender mercies of a French landlady. I knew nothing of this for many days, or should have hastened to the sick-bed of my young friend; but at that very time I was racking my poor brains to think of some means of rescuing Isabel from a marriage with Lord C——, whom I felt quite sure she must detest, and that only force could unite her to him.

The little femme-de-chambre had scarce quitted my presence ere I had determined on the steps I would take, but I knew much caution and secrecy would be necessary, and consequently few coadjutors in my scheme could be allowed. I made inquiries as to the truth of Lord C—'s departure from Ramsgate, and was well assured that he was off for —shire.

The journey of Lady Milford and her daughter was performed with railway speed, and little conversation passed between them after leaving the train; and driving through a very pretty part of ——shire for nearly six miles, they entered a lane, which extended for about another mile through the forest of ——, and then suddenly came in sight of a modern-looking building, surrounded by walls with massive gates.

"This looks like a prison, or a nunnery," exclaimed Isabel, as they were driving up to the house. "Does Mrs. Coddington live here?"

"No, dear Isabel," replied Lady Milford; "but I am going to introduce you to a most pious Catholic lady, who will, I hope, be able, by sound argument and kind persuasions, to convince you of your errors."

"My dear mamma," said Isabel, looking alarmed, "I do think it is a

nunnery, tell me really if you want to make a nun of me."

"No, indeed, my dear child, I do not wish to do so, but I hope you will soon learn to see the errors you have been led into lately; the wisdom of the lady abbess will, doubtless, suggest some expedient for leading you back to the true faith."

Isabel was silent for a moment, then, looking at her mother, gravely said.

"Where does your friend, Mrs. Coddington, live?"

"Not very distant," said Lady Milford, colouring slightly; "but I am

going to leave you here, Isabel."

Poor Isabel became quite alarmed at this notification, and entreated her mother not to cast her off, or leave her to the cruel inflictions she

dreaded might be put upon her in that solitary place.

"Ah! mamma," said she, in a pleading tone, "I would not leave you to go abroad with papa, and can you consent to incarcerate your child in a living tomb? For I feel sure, if I once cross that dreadful threshold, I shall never escape a miserable doom. Father Donald has induced you to this step, I am quite sure—(Oh, most miserable Isabel! if thy mother turns against thee, who on earth can help?)—But," said she, suddenly checking herself, "I am very faithless—I have a friend who will never forsake me, I will trust in him—and though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I need fear no evil—wherefore, then, need I fear what man can do unto me? Oh, blessed Scripture, which can console and strengthen me when earthly friends forsake! Ah, my mother! may it be yours to know the comfort of the Gospel of Christ, which you so reprehend your child for studying."

The carriage stopped, and they were ushered into a small parlour, where an elderly lady received them with a solemn coldness, which quite made Isabel's blood curdle; she felt like one in the presence of an executioner, and about to suffer the extreme sentence of the law. The "holy mother," as the lady termed herself, spoke little, and what she did say, was uttered in an austere tone little likely to re-assure Isabel's sinking

heart.

Lady Milford spoke in a mild, deprecatory way of her daughter's unfortunate "falling away," as she termed Isabel's opposition to Romish error; and besought "the mother" to adopt every necessary measure to convince her of the sin she was guilty of in thus clinging to heretical doctrine. After remaining but a short time, as it seemed to Isabel when she saw her rise to leave, but what had appeared very long during its flight, Lady Milford embraced her, and promised to see her on the following day. And Isabel, seeing all opposition useless, wept bitterly on her mother's neck.

The trial to Lady Milford was excessive; she dreaded some unseen evil; yet her priest had urged her to trust in him—had promised that all should be well—that in a week Isabel should be married to Lord C——; that indissoluble knot once tied, she need not fear for her daughter's happiness; she would be always with her, and their visit to Rome would quite efface the childish notions of rebellion which now held their sway in the breast of Isabel. With an effort at self-control Lady Milford left the house, and drove off, not to an old friend's, but to a small lodging at some distance. Mrs. Coddington was, in truth, the name of the landlady; but Isabel would have been somewhat laughably surprised to have recognised in that fat, good-humoured person, any resemblance to the high-born, aristocratic personage she had pictured her mother's friend, "Mrs. Coddington," to be.

If Lady Milford felt the change from her luxurious home to the plain,

simple comfort of a country lodging, how much more did Isabel the miserable contrast to the gloomy mansion in which she was now incarcerated! But Isabel had not yet learned to despond; a silent voice still whispered comfort, and she laid her head upon her pillow, that first night of her prisoned life, with as buoyant a hope of happier days as if some favouring spirit had cast a sweet halo of peace around her dreary comfortless couch.

Her sleep was calm and refreshing, but the morning light opened upon her with fresh trials. She was summoned to early matins, and forced to obey, yet she could only perform her silent devotions to the unseen hearer of prayer, while those around her acted the useless mummeries which their ignorance and superstition dictated. So pained was she by witnessing these, that her spirits became more depressed than hitherto, and her apprehension of personal danger painfully oppressive. In the course of the morning she was led to the superior's private parlour, and introduced into the presence of Lord C——. She recoiled from his touch, as with smiles—which discovered the whole set of his brilliantly white teeth—he advanced with his hand extended to meet her. On seeing her shrink back, he darted a disdainful look, saying,

"You scarcely deign a smile to repay me for the long journey I have

made to gain one!"

"Your lordship was so well assured that such payment was not in store for you, that I can scarcely believe the journey has been made for so poor

an object."

"Right, sweet Isabel! right—but be sure a dauntless heart ne'er quailed before a maiden's frown, and smiles the soonest gained are not always the most worth possessing. Yours will be enhanced tenfold in value by this maidenly coyness."

This was said with impertinent freedom, and Isabel's colour rose with

indignation.

"If your lordship came here but to insult me by such unwarranted freedom of remark, I must request you will no longer intrude."

"Nay, Isabel, such could never be the intention of one who is abso-

lutely languishing for a smile from those sweet lips."

Isabel grew more and more offended, and would gladly have left the room, but he had placed himself between her and the door, and his atti-

tude defied her to attempt it.

In vain she entreated him to allow her to pass; his replies only more and more exasperated her, till at length, in despair of effecting her escape from him, she rang the bell, hoping for assistance from the lady abbess; but on the appearance of that grave personage she was disappointed to find his lordship had but gained a coadjutor, and she was compelled to

listen to his harangue with forced composure.

"Isabel!—if you prefer it as being more suitable to your dignity," continued he, with a sneer, "Miss Milford—why you are so averse to listen to my profession of admiration I know not, except it be that you prefer more boyish frippery and foolery in courtship than mature manhood is inclined to yield; yours may be a peculiar taste, but certainly at your age few young ladies entertain love for schoolboys. I cannot throw myself at your feet, and sue for the hand which is withheld; but I can love, where it is freely yielded. With some natures, unrequited love has

been known to turn into hate—you will do well to beware of such unsuccessful lovers!"

"Do you think it possible to frighten one into loving?" replied Isabel,

calmly.

"No; but it is sometimes needful to open the eyes of the blind. Miss Milford, I have already made known to your mamma the settlements I am ready to make on you as my wife. Ah! you shudder at the name," said he, with increasing hanteur. "You shall——" Here he muttered some indistinct sounds between his clenched teeth. "You may yet live to regret this folly," said he; and with a hasty adieu to the superior, and a glance of fiery indignation at Isabel, he left the room.

Isabel felt more alarmed than she liked to confess; the abbess made no remark on what had passed, but soon quitted the apartment, and Isabel remained in quiet meditation until joined by her mother, who, in the course of the morning, called to see her. Vainly did Isabel expostulate with, and even entreat, Lady Milford to put an end to Lord C--'s visits. An evasive reply was all she could gain; the promise she needed to quiet her fears of a continued persecution was withheld. Several days passed in dull monotony, for she was left almost constantly alone, with a missal, a rosary, and a crucifix. At length, Isabel's loss of appetite, and depressed spirits, made the "pious sisters" combine to urge her to take some little exercise and fresh air. This she had hitherto declined, from an unwillingness to accept what she considered a "patrol," or even worse, for with characteristic monastic propriety, she was to have been guarded by a stately nun if she issued from behind the walls of her prison. By degrees her failing health made her feel more ready to accept even this favour, and, accompanied by one of the sisters, she set off for a short walk in the neighbourhood. Lord C—— was almost instantly at her side. His manner was changed from haughty arrogance to something more tender and impassioned.

But where was Ernest Montague at this critical season of trial to the fair Isabel's faithful attachment to him? Why had he never written to her since his departure? Weeks had elapsed, and she had not received one letter. She feared her letters had been intercepted; but though she had repeatedly entreated her mother to tell her if such was the case, and if Father Donald had induced her to take any step to prevent communication, her mother's replies satisfied her that such was not the case, and she was gradually drawn into the belief that Ernest's attachment had cooled with absence; that novelty of scene had absorbed his interest, to the exclusion of all remembrance of her. He was young. Had he not, indeed, that steadfastness of character she had hitherto believed? She recalled his ingenuous, speaking face—his deep impassioned tones, while speaking of his love for her, and she reproached herself for thinking him faithless. Yet, why had he not written? Could he be ill? He had left

in perfect health.

She had only once seen the old bachelor since Ernest set out for the Continent. Why had he never called to see her? She had met him while walking with her mother, and he had surprised her by bowing stiffly as he passed, instead of, as hitherto, cordially shaking hands. And then she had written to him before leaving Ramsgate, and never received an answer. It was all very surprising. What could she have done to

offend him? She was in great distress to account for his behaviour, and had even mentioned her surprise to her mother; but Lady Milford merely replied that, "Doubtless the old gentleman had seen the folly of his late conduct in encouraging his young friend to form an engagement, and was now anxious to put a stop to it." Isabel could make no reply, but an expressed doubt of such being the case, and had sought to hide her fears and misgivings in her own bosom. But still she loved, as only woman loves; and Ernest Montague's image was the treasure of her heart, the silent charm of life, while all around her seemed threatening evil; his voice was ever in her ear, whispering sweet hope of future joy.

It is well we are not all gifted with second sight; how much more troubled would Isabel have been could she have seen and heard what passed in the little parlour at Mrs. Coddington's, the third day of her sojourn at the convent. There sat Father Donald, in close conversation

with Lady Milford.

"Decided steps must be taken, daughter, ere too late; she is within a few weeks of coming of age, and your authority will, in a measure, cease. Your only hope of reclaiming her, if you don't want her to be a nun—which latter I don't see why you should be so averse to. But, however, as I was saying, your only hope then rests in getting her married to a zealous Catholic—such is Lord C——; a most estimable man! his charity is unbounded; and though I do assure you he has a seven years' indulgence from his Holiness the Pope, for services performed to Mother Church, he ceases not to continue unnumbered penances; in fact, your daughter may esteem herself fortunate in gaining such a husband, rebellious and backsliding as she is. The lady abbess wishes to compel her to attend the confessional to-morrow; she is of opinion that it is the first step towards reclaiming her."

"I fear it is useless trying to prevail, we shall only drive her to abjure

the true faith; remember, she is in an heretical country."

"But, daughter," said the priest, with one of his diabolical looks of triumph, "what matters that to us now? She is safe within those walls from all interference."

"But remember, father, you have promised me on your sacred oath,

that my child shall not be dealt with hardly."

"No, no, fear not, daughter—but you fear more for her body than soul, I am afraid. You will do well to say an additional Ave Maria for that."

"I have not seen Isabel for three days—why have you forbidden me

access to her, father?"

"In the hope of humbling her pride, daughter. The holy abbess has been most anxious for her soul's weal—has inflicted some gentle chastisements—but she is treated with tenderness by her and the pious sisters. To-day, by my advice, she has been permitted to walk to some little distance from the convent, with a worthy nun, and Lord C—— himself condescends to accept the office of guardian to her. I do not fear much in this quiet neighbourhood, but it is well to take precautions. I have forbidden that she should be allowed to speak to any one without the ear of one of the sisterhood, or his lordship, and I believe they are all vigilant friends. If she can resist his lordship in his present mood, I shall indeed be surprised, for he is playing the part of a devoted lover.

I have in truth, daughter, advised him to lay aside a little of his dignity to suit your daughter's caprice, for it seems she is fond of the idle unmeaning words of admiration—such vanity should earlier have been checked; for the present, for her soul's weal, we must humour it."

"I wish to see Isabel to-day, father," said Lady Milford, assuming a

somewhat authoritative tone.

The priest looked surprised, but answered in a hesitating way,

"Don't you think, daughter, you had better defer it a little—another day. She is coming round, for I am told she is more civil to his lord-ship."

"I must see my daughter to-day," repeated Lady Milford.

Father Donald scowled, and replied,

"Daughter, you evince an impetuous spirit, unlike the pious graces of the character you have hitherto borne. Check, then, this rising evil, and do penance for it. In consideration of your delicate health, holy Mother Church will accept a gift in lieu of extreme acts of service."

"My funds are low, father, you must name the sum."

"Daughter, how often have I told you that a voluntary gift covers sin more effectually than an extorted one."

Lady Milford said no more, but drew out her purse, and a gold coin

passed quickly into the cunning priest's fingers.

"I may see Isabel to-day, father?"

"Yes, daughter, if you will," said he, in a discontented tone; and shortly after, her ladyship drove off to the convent.

Meanwhile Isabel had been for the walk Father Donald had informed

her mother of.

The balmy air refreshed her languid frame, and she listened with unusual patience to Lord C--'s effrontery, and even replied to his remarks with calm politeness. During the walk she was attracted by a poor-looking beggar man, who evidently strove to arrest her attention, and yet did not come very near. Isabel remembered that, for several days, she had observed this same wretched-looking man hovering near the convent-walls whenever she had been permitted to go near the grated window of the abbess's parlour, and she was sure he must be in great distress, and probably had sought charity at the convent, she felt very anxious to relieve him, and put her hand in her pocket for her purse, on seeing which the beggar drew nearer; his lordship's attention was directed another way by a pretty-looking girl, who, apparently conscious of having attracted his notice, tossed her head, and looked back repeatedly over her shoulder; and, while the old nun was frowning at the gazing lord, Isabel dropped a shilling into the beggar's hand, and he quickly slipped a paper into hers, at the same time placing his finger on his lips; the impulse of the moment was, fortunately for her, to crush it in her hand; the next moment the old nun turned sharply round, and his lordship austerely ordered the beggar off; the nun muttered something about the impropriety of her conduct, and that "young ladies at convents had no right to carry purses with money, it was an oversight of the holy mothers, and must be looked to." Isabel's thoughts were too much engrossed in wondering what the paper contained, to heed either the nun or his lordship for some time. She was all anxiety to find an opportunity to read it, but knew not when that might occur; she felt that at every turn she was watched; even at night, on her hard pallet, with that dim lamp glimmering, she fancied a dozen pair of eyes were sending a hateful glare around her. She, however, tried to appear unconcerned during the rest of the walk, and, on their return to the convent, was rejoiced to find her mother awaiting her. She almost flew into her arms, exclaiming,

"Dearest mamma, I thought you had deserted me, how many days it is since you have been here! Oh! dear mamma, you could not leave me thus, if you knew the anguish I suffer. Why am I thus made prisoner? Oh, do not again leave me; why should we be divided? I will devote

my life to you, my own dear mother, if you will let me."

"I have but stayed away for a brief space, my darling Isabel, that I might, when we meet again, receive you to my arms, never again to be parted; it rests with you, my child, to decide if you return with me this very day."

"And is there no condition to be imposed?" said Isabel, doubtfully. "Alas!" continued she, observing her mother glance at Lord C—,

"too surely I fear there is."

"Consent to be my beautiful bride, ma charmante, and you shall never again, while life lasts, part from your sweet mother!" said Lord C—, advancing, and offering to take her hand.

"And, if I refuse, what must be the consequence?"

"Would you like to be a nun?" said he, with a look of triumph.

"Must it be either one or the other?" asked Isabel.

"My dearest child, do not grieve me by your reply, say you will con-

sent to my wishes."

"And act against conscience, against reason, against religion? Can I do this—even for you—even to save myself from present misery? Oh, no! it cannot be; I must submit to the dungeon shown me but yesterday; I must submit to the scourge inflicted on me but the day before; and, finally, perhaps—oh, horror!—must submit to a lingering, torturing death! And is it to this the mother, whom I've loved so fondly, can doom me—leave me; will she not yet, ere too late, make one effort to reclaim her child? Mother, if you leave me this day, I am lost to you for ever! I feel that these cold walls will shut me out for ever from earth's joys; and Heaven only knows what tortures may be in store for me; I have no friend on earth!" but at that moment Isabel remembered the paper given to her by the beggar, and hope again lit a beacon which made her pause.

"My Isabel, you are too rash in your sayings," said Lady Milford, as with emotion she clasped her in her arms, looking round in dismay at the frowning brows of Lord C—— and the lady abbess. "Strange fancies have taken possession of your mind, imbibed from some of your heretical friends; you have been misled, dear one, and fear too much; yet I would have you look at life's bright picture—a happy home is offered to you, an honourable and loving husband,"—Lord C—— sneered slightly almost

imperceptibly—" and a fond mother."

Isabel made no reply.

"Many as proud, and may I say it, beautiful women, have sought to win what is freely laid at your feet, Isabel. Wealth and title, and in addition to these I offer you what alone you profess to value, a loving heart. You shall be a peerless peeress, Isabel, if you will," said his lordship.

"Peer-less I am willing to be," said Isabel, as she smiled at his unconscious pun.

Lord C____'s countenance, which had been more radiant with smiles than it had ever been known before, now again looked dark and scowling,

and he spoke in an irritable tone.

"Miss Milford, this once I offer you—yet this once—to be the sharer of my title and fortune. My love you have sorely tried, but your smiles may do wonders, even with this proud heart," said he, with affected humility.

"I thank you for the honour intended, my lord; but it is useless saying more than what I believe you have long been aware of, that I could

never accept it."

Lord C- clenched his teeth with rage, and his eyes literally flashed

as with a lightning glance he turned from her to Lady Milford.

"It is well your ladyship hears your daughter's words, but she may live to sue for what she now rejects," and bowing with haughty disdain, he left the convent.

"Oh! Isabel, my child! my child, you know not what you have done!" exclaimed Lady Milford, as his lordship passed from the room.

THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LVII.

"How is this, my ladies," said the Duchess of Parma, turning from the small Venetian mirror before which she sat, whilst her Italian waiting women were adjusting over her hair the black veil she never laid aside. "Why look you all so cast down? Tears in your eyes, Mary de Horn—and in yours, Isabel of Egmont—and even you, my little Margaret," she added, turning with a kind look to Isabel's companion, whom it was her especial pleasure to have much about her person; "you, too, look as if you had been weeping."

No one would plead guilty to the fact, except Margaret, whose unsophisticated frankness and decision of mind had made her a great favourite

with her princely namesake.

"I may well weep, madam," replied she, unhesitatingly, "when my father is yet in prison, and a delegate comes from Spain with powers I know not what, and a mind which may, to say the least, be prejudiced."

"You need not fear," said the regent. "Have I not promised you your father's life? The Duke of Alba, my child, may not will anything in opposition to my promises. You forget I am the regent still, though it may not suit my inclination to remain so much longer. I am, indeed, weary both in mind and body. I have spared no exertion—no fatigue.

I may without vanity say, that the medal struck in my honour represents me aright, standing on a rock, which the fury of the waves cannot shake. But my triumph is achieved—the country is quiet—the holy religion avenged, and my task is well nigh over. I long to return to the joys of my family—to see again my husband, my heroic son, my saint-like daughter-in-law, and to embrace my grandchildren. But though I may not remain much longer among you, I will not depart before all is cleared up which could give a shadow of anxiety to those who have trusted in me; nor must you forget, Margaret, that so long as I remain here the Duke of Alba is but the leader of a force sent to support my authority. So turn those tears to smiles; and you, ladies, cheerfully assist to array me fitly to receive the duke, who will present his credentials this very afternoon. But, Countess Isabel," she said, suddenly casting a hasty glance over the shrinking person of the young girl, "methinks your dress scarcely beseems your rank. I know and approve much of the carelessness with which you overlook external things, which others of your age sometimes so foolishly overvalue; you consider yourself already the bride of Heaven, but it concerns your house's honour that you appear to-day with somewhat more of state."

"I am one of many sisters," said Isabel, with a faltering voice and a

downcast look.

"Nay," said the duchess, opening a casket of large dimensions beside the mirror. "The king but lately sent me over some tokens for you, forgive my tardiness in delivering them." So saying, she took out a splendid pearl necklace with depending brooch, and passed it with her own hand over Isabel's head. "When you may no longer wear such an ornament," she continued, "transfer it to the image of the Virgin, and thus rest assured you will have honoured the king by bestowing as well as by wearing it. I, too, must be more scrupulous about my toilet than usual;" and re-opening the casket, she selected from its glittering contents a few of the richest gems, which she laid on the table for that day's use; but while the business of the hour was proceeding, she continued speaking, in a manner that showed how very small a portion of her attention she bestowed upon the matter.

"The moment your father is free, Margaret, you enter upon your noviciate. Happy girl! to walk in the pleasant shades of life, whilst others are obliged to toil up its rugged ascent through the wearying heat of day, and most to be pitied those whose places are on the very summit

where the sun glows most fiercely."

"Yet, gracious lady," said Margaret, with a smile which she could not suppress, "power has charms, they say, for those who are born to it."

The remark was graciously received, as indeed, generally was everything that came from her new favourite; for if the princess treated Isabel with marked favour, it was easy to perceive she sought to conciliate and flatter the Count of Egmont in his daughter; but the reserve and overweening timidity of the latter, her dreamy and gentle nature, were most ill calculated in reality to secure the affection of the regent, whose stern nature loved decision in others, especially when it did not turn into direct opposition to herself. This, joined to the desire natural to reflective minds of reading the thoughts and characters of others,

attracted her towards her new protégée, in whose artless frankness there was something both new and pleasing to one accustomed to courtly

prudence in all who surrounded her.

"Yes," she replied, smiling kindly; "power has its pleasures as well as its thorns. Ill would it beseem me, at this moment especially, to deny it, when I cannot but feel elated with the success that has crowned all my endeavours; when I am about to receive one who was sent to me in the hour of utmost need, with the assurance that his assistance is no longer needed-that his task is over ere it has begun. The Queen of Hungary must have felt as I now do when her troops returned victorious from France. Yes," she added, rising, and placing one hand on Margaret's shoulder, and looking full into her intelligent hazel eyes, as if conscious of speaking to one who could understand her. "Yes, the hour of triumph is sweet-to-day I feel this more than ever, and all those whom I befriend should feel confident and happy." Though these words were addressed to Margaret, her eyes glanced at the ladies of Egmont and Horn, as if to intimate that they were meant for all alike; then turning to the young Countess of Egmont, she added, "You will soon experience a pleasure you little expect—your father is returned to Brussels, and will be here to-day. I, too, shall be pleased to see him." spoke the word with peculiar emphasis. "We now understand each other. Ah! would to Heaven, Isabel, that each had known the other sooner, it might have spared us both much uneasiness-me especially-"

She broke off abruptly, an involuntary sigh filling up the pause, and turned to her toilet, as if unwilling to continue the subject. This soon came to an end, and she stood now ready prepared to receive her expected

visitor.

Her dress was truly superb. It consisted of an upper robe of rich, violet-coloured silk, on which were interwoven flowers and arabesques in silver, and which opening in front exposed to view an under robe of white satin literally covered with diamonds, that glittered like water in the sun at every step she took. At her girdle hung the never-failing rosary; but on this occasion, that she ordinarily wore was exchanged for one composed of matchless pearls and rubies. This splendour, however, harmonised but little with the wrinkles of her countenance, overshadowed by her black veil; and the tight bodice concealed not the thin, stiffened form and harsh outline of her person so effectually as the more sober and ample vestments which her taste usually selected. But Margaret of Parma that day felt herself completely the regent. She had owned to the pleasure resulting from power; but its pride was in her step, and its consciousness in her flashing eye.

"Follow me, ladies," she said; "we will instantly to the presence-chamber—I hear the duke's horses already in the court below, and waving cold etiquette we will show our impatience to do him honour."

Silently did they follow. Isabel grew deadly pale, and Margaret started forward to support her, dreading lest she was about to swoon. But she was mistaken; Isabel did not feel faint, yet even as she refused the proffered assistance, Margaret remarked that her hands were cold and clammy with the excess of agitation. Scarcely had they taken their stand in the presence-chamber, where the gentlemen of the household and many of the nobility were already assembled, when the doors were

flung open, and, preceded by gentlemen ushers and pages, with a display of pomp and ceremony more suitable to the representative of sovereignty than a Spanish duke, whatever his pretensions, at last entered the longexpected Duke of Alba. Isabel's long eyelashes dropped like friendly curtains over her blue orbs, as if she even feared to gaze upon this object of her apprehension; but Margaret, emboldened by her insignificance, raised her eyes full on the duke, and beheld a most truly noble and com-

manding figure.

Tall beyond the ordinary height of man, not thin, but narrow in his make, all muscle and bone, his was evidently one of those frames of iron in which nature often forgets to interweave the more delicate and sensitive fibres—a frame that can better endure than feel. His air could not be termed simply martial-for the training of the field can graft it on most men-but he seemed to have been born a leader. There was something harsh and ascetic about his whole person, which insensibly connected it in the mind of the beholder with the steel harness or the dark robe of a monk. His face was of an unusual length, but his aquiline nose, thin, yet powerfully marked, his compressed lips, his long, sweeping eyebrows, and lofty forehead, formed a countenance striking, even handsome in youth, and remarkable from its firm, clear outlines in The pale, olive skin, peculiar to men of his country, was advanced life. drawn tightly over his well rounded cheek-bones, and no furrows marked the accumulation of years, and the fatigues he had encountered. brow alone was strongly contracted, as if with the habit of displeasure; his eye was at times restless and fierce, and the depth of its colour harmonised with the long waving beard descending to his waist, in which, however, the grey tints were in parts rapidly gaining ground over its original raven black.

Without being a physiognomist, Margaret could see that it was not depth of thought but an iron will that imparted to his features their rigidity; he looked like one whom nothing could move to mildness, but whom one word would rouse to fury. Strange to say, unlike as he was to anything she had ever seen, it seemed to her that she did not gaze on those features for the first time—that they were in some manner associated with the past—but in what shape, in spite of all her endeavours, she found it impossible to trace; and yet the impression was so strong,

that by no effort of reason could she shake it off.

Most remarkable in his numerous train were his two sons, Don Federigo, his lawful heir, and Don Fernando, his natural son, Grand Prior of Castille, equally beloved and prized by their father, and who received almost equal honours from the world at large. Their eyes were repeatedly turned towards the place where the ladies of the regent stood, whose persons they were scanning with a coolness bordering on insolence; Margaret was compelled to withdraw herself from their scrutinising looks, for no small share of this rude, soldierly homage was lavished upon her.

The duke having delivered his credentials with true Spanish gravity, and exchanged with the regent many of those insignificant phrases enjoined by ceremony—as empty of meaning as the passing wind—permitted his eye to rest on the park which was visible through the open casement.

The regent, observing his fixed attention, instantly led the way to the balcony, whither of course none ventured to follow. But Margaret van Meeren happened to be near the door through which they now stepped, lost within the shade of its rich hangings, and thus stood unavoidably near the illustrious personages, who were unconscious of her proximity. Timidity, a want of habit in such a circle, kept her rooted to her place, although she felt in so doing like one committing a most flagrant enormity in the very eyes of all around her. Painful and awkward as the situation was, it was yet aggravated by the distinctness with which every word pronounced on the balcony reached her ear.

"The place is not altered since you were last here with my imperial father," said the duchess; "you will find everywhere traces of him, which it has been my study to preserve—the labyrinths, grounds, and especially the house he built for himself, all remain exactly as he left them."

"These are, then, the only things unchanged," replied the duke, in

his deep, hoarse tones.

"I do not know that. I have so well restored order, that you will scarce be able even to guess at the awful changes that had taken place."

"Really, madam," answered the duke, with an incredulous smile. "However, to make quite certain that they do not recur, no small exer-

tion will be necessary.'

"Of course," said the duchess, "something there is yet to do, but that is not much. It is rather early to speak of affairs, but still I may as well mention that I have already granted many pardons, and am about to grant more."

"Nay, madam, I am sorry to be obliged to put a check on aught that it pleases your highness to design, but I can grant no pardons."

"You!" exclaimed the duchess; "I should think this matter rests

solely with myself, Sir Duke?"

"I grieve to say you will find it otherwise," said Alba, with a smile he could not repress. "If you deign but to glance over the papers I have laid before you, you will see that I am fully and alone authorised to look into these matters."

"That were indeed leaving me regent but in name," said the duchess

with vehemence; but the Duke of Alba remained unmoved.

"My royal master has considered what is due to your sex, madam, in

not making you the minister of his anger."

"Still, I suppose," said the duchess, haughtily, "you will not refuse to coincide with me in any measures—to grant me any requests—pardons—"

"Pardons!" repeated the duke, with an air of fierce astonishment.

"I can—I will grant none!"

"I pray you, at least, to consider, my lord duke, that there are some heads too high to be touched with impunity, and others too low for your

resentment to stoop to."

"Madam," replied the duke, "there are none throughout this land so high but they are amenable to the king's authority; and none so low that they should escape punishment. Yes, madam," added he, bowing

coolly to the duchess, "you see in me, I grieve to say it, not the minister of mercy, but the avenging angel."

"Is it so?" murmured the duchess. "Is it even so?—but I have brought it on myself—mea culpa, mea culpa!" and she turned haughtily

from the balcony.

"And is this her hour of triumph and of power?" thought Margaret van Meeren. "Alas, for poor vain mortals! that know not from one hour to the next what they may have to grieve for, what to rejoice at—

and my poor father, thy fate is decided!"

All in the room could perceive by the angry flush on the regent's countenance that something had passed between the Duke of Alba and herself, and many there were, especially among the Spaniards, who guessed pretty accurately at the cause of her emotion, for they knew that little short of sovereign authority had been vested in their leader.

Margaret of Parma in her present mood was not willing to prolong the audience, and it soon drew to a close. All dispersed to seek their different

quarters with hearts more or less busy with the impending future.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE hotel of Cuylenburg, rendered historical by the banquet which the confederates held within its walls, became doubly so as the residence of the Duke of Alba, who had there taken up his quarters. In one of the smaller apartments, a few days after his interview with the regent, sat that nobleman with an air of concern visible on his countenance; and before him stood, in an attitude of deep humility, a man of low stature and ignoble features, made still more unprepossessing by a peculiar expression of knavery. He was no longer young, and his dress was - for in those days classes were marked by their outward appearance-of a doubtful kind, and such as would have perplexed the beholder to determine to which order of society he properly belonged. The gay but soiled plumes in his bonnet, the deep but tarnished gold lace that bordered his cloak, above all, the long rapier by his side, sufficiently indicated his pretensions to be ranked among gentlemen, although the braveries of his costume were too faded to belong to one who was in any way a dependent on a noble house. There was an evident attempt on his part to look melancholy; but it would have been easy for an attentive observer to detect that fear and not sadness was the predominant feeling at that moment, and to read, in the furtive glances he stole at his dreaded patron, the keenest anxiety as to the effect his words produced. Like a skilful waterman, who will not only avoid the shock of the wind, but endeavour so to catch it in his sail as to profit by the gust, he cautiously progressed in his discourse, slowly and artfully paving the way to revelations whose suddenness must have been fatal to him, and from which he still hoped, though he hardly dared to think it probable, he might derive advantage.

"And so," said Alba, in continuation of some foregoing dialogue, "she

died in true repentance, and a faithful believer?"

"Even as I have informed you," replied the man. "For the last ten

years she has been an example of piety to the community of Sancta Clara, where she took the veil under the name of Mary Magdelen."

"That is a great consolation to me," said the duke, crossing himself; and a great blessing. It washes away part of my sin. And to the last

she kept her word, you say, and my secret?"

"So much so," responded the other, "that I never became aware of it until she was on her deathbed. She then told me the whole story—how that Lopez, who, born in Africa and of a Moorish mother, I had conceived to be a Moor, was the son of a Christian knight and a great lord—in short, she entrusted me with the great secret of her life, and told me that her son owed his birth to no less illustrious a person than yourself—even the boy knew it not. True, she often spoke of a princely lineage, but I always understood this to refer to the kings of whom she said she was descended."

"She was!" said the duke, with emphasis—" she was the lineal descendant of the ill-fated Boabdil. Poor Zaida! how faithful she has been to me, and how indifferently have I recompensed a trust like hers! But then, as a Christian knight, I could not envelop such circumstances in too much mystery. Had Zaida consented to become a Christian sooner, it would have smoothed away many difficulties from the path of

her son."

"It was with a view to his interests that she ultimately adopted the tenets of our faith."

"Say not so," cried Alba, striking with impatience the arm of the chair on which he sat. "Let me at least believe she was touched by the truth."

"Undoubtedly, my lord, she died a true Christian-I meant only at

first, of course-but-"

"Never mind what went first or what came last," said the duke; "but tell me in what manner the child has been brought up? Since the death of my secretary, Rodriguez, I have had no means of inquiring after him."

"When Rodriguez first offered Zaida, her child and fortune to me, it was a chance of bettering my fortunes, which no penniless hidalgo would have neglected, even with the conditions he annexed to it; namely, that the infant Lopez should pass for being a son of mine. I have kept those conditions most faithfully."

"And Rodriguez kept his," replied the duke. "You had the money, and squandered it shamefully, as I have heard. I remember it well, for

it came out of my own exchequer."

"Rodriguez was close; and I never guessed, at that time, the source whence my treasure flowed, so little so, indeed, that I for some time suspected the whole matter to be one of purely personal interest to himself, and of course thought that I deserved some indemnity for my own accommodativeness. Later, when Rodriguez died, I had no one to apply to in my difficulties, and was obliged to shift for myself and mine as I best could."

"I have ever had the intention," said the duke, "of repairing eventually all involuntary injustice under which I have caused that unfortunate boy to suffer; but on account of his mother's unhappy creed this required extreme caution. Zaida knew well the day would come when all would

be redressed, and that no offshoot of the house of Alba could remain in obscurity. Nor do I see evil in having permitted his childhood and youth to be entrusted to the care of subordinates. Did not my noble master's son, Don Juan of Austria, spend his early years under the humble roof and in the lowly training of a rude shepherd, and yet is he not now a perfect mirror of chivalry and knightly grace? An infallible token that blood outweighs breeding. But how have my hopes in this child been realised?"

"His beauty and his grace, my lord, have been the theme of every

"He has, doubtless, entered on the career of arms—under whom?"

demanded the duke. "Speak, Nunez."

"I pray you to remember, my lord, that although your bounty was great to my own person, you refused me all assistance as he grew up to further any plans which I may have entertained for him. Ignorant at that time of any claim that either he or I might possess upon you, except the bare fact of my having once made part of your household, and that for a very short time, I saw no means of bettering his condition, and idleness was unsupportable to his venturous, impatient nature. I loved him, and held him dear as a son, and acted by him as if he had been such; I had friends in these parts, and I sent Lopez to them with letters to beg them to further his views."

"And those views—what were they?" said the duke, impatiently, scarcely able any longer to control the irritation which the lengthy

manner of Nunez roused within him.

"Now that I know of what high blood he came, I dare scarcely bring myself to say after what fashion he has been driven to sue fortune."

"What!-but proceed, I command you," said the duke, in a severe tone.

"He put himself assistant to one of the richest men in Antwerp,

although that man was a-a merchant."

"My son," exclaimed Alba, haughtily, "a clerk to a merchant! You are mad—mad to have done this, and madder still to come and tell me of it. Nunez, I thought you an hidalgo, though one of broken fortunes,

or that boy never would have been entrusted to your charge."

The duke took a few hasty turns through the apartment to calm his agitation, during which time the person he had called Nunez stood in an attitude of deprecatory humility. At last the duke resumed his seat, having, apparently by a strong effort, sufficiently commanded his temper to listen to what might yet remain to be told. Then Nunez explained to him that the young man had merely entered that merchant's house with a view to obtain the hand of his daughter; and that had he succeeded, he would thus have secured wealth and rank, although the latter was unknown to the object of his choice. This seemed to satisfy the duke, and to dispel, in some degree, the heavy clouds of displeasure that had been fast gathering on his brow.

"It matters not," he said; "we will pass it off as a freak of love. But where is he now?—married in Antwerp? What name does he bear?"

"He bore that of Lopez Chievosa in this country," replied Nunez, "in

Spain he bore mine. But, alas! now, poor youth, all names are alike to him!" He uttered these words with undisguised trepidation.

"What mean you?"—and for a moment the natural feelings of the father overcame the rigidity of the duke—"what mean you? Has

aught evil befallen him?"

"My lord, he is dead! He was slain in the late riots at Antwerp, having been falsely accused of being a Spanish spy. It was the foul deed of some burgher, envious probably of his luck, or jealous of his country."

"Dead! Did you say dead?" repeated the duke.

"Yes, my lord—they have murdered him, and have not even accorded him a Christian burial. He was flung into a ditch, and there left to die, like a dog!"

The duke again rose. The only tender chord of his nature had been struck, but feebly—that of his habitual violence and passion now vibrated through his whole being. His frame actually quivered with fury; and

his voice, when he could find utterance, was hoarse and choked.

"Antwerp shall pay dearly for this!" he exclaimed. "I will spare neither high nor low, rich nor poor. I will have buckets of their dirty blood for every drop of mine they have dared to shed! Ha! they little know, they little guess, how dearly they shall pay for this. I will spare none—I will be revenged on these base Flemings who have dared to raise their voice against the Spaniards! Their daughters—nay, their children unborn, shall weep for this deed of their fathers! But when and how learnt you this?"

"Yesterday, instead of riding up with your train towards Brussels, I went to Antwerp in quest of Lopez, eager to let him know, poor youth, that now his days of privation were at an end, and that he was to be made great and rich. But, alas! I learnt his fate from eye-witnesses—they

have lain him low enough!"

"They shall soon lay lower," said Alba; and a light played in his eyes, which might well have belonged to those of a panther. "I would have done much for him in life—I will do more for him in death."

"I have not yet yielded to my grief," said Nunez, "nor paid him the tribute of a father's tears, so eager was I to communicate his fate to

one who would know so well how to avenge it."

"It is blood, not tears, that a father owes a murdered son," said Alba; "that debt shall be richly paid. But," he added, suddenly changing the vehemence of his tone for one scarcely less haughty, but more composed, "I must not forget what I owe you, too, for the long years during which you were his only friend. I never suffered mortal to hold a balance against me—that debt, too, shall be paid—your fortune is assured. Go, Nunez, I would be alone."

The duke continued, after the departure of his obsequious companion, to stalk up and down the apartment with long strides. The only emotions of which his nature was susceptible, and which sprung merely from his egotism, namely, a certain degree of love for, and pride in, whatever belonged to him, were now warring within his bosom; but instead of regretting the injustice with which he had neglected and condemned to oblivion one child whilst he had elevated another, born exactly under the

same circumstances, to the very pinnacle of fortune, he confirmed himself, by all the arguments his passion could suggest, in the hasty notion that the death of his son alone had interfered with his kindness; and accordingly, instead of lamenting his untimely end, he indulged in an excess of resentment but too likely to bear evil fruit in a country towards which, unhappily, he bore no good-will. Unfortunately, too, this mood tallied but too well with the orders he had received from Philip, nor was he surrounded by those who would have thought to mitigate his angry feelings. The first ebullition of his rage was subsiding when the door of the apartment was flung open with noise, and several persons entered hastily.

"Well," said Alba, stopping suddenly in his walk, and placing his long thin hand upon a table, whose rich crimson brocade harmonised with its

dusky hue, "are they come at last?"

"The Dukes of Archot and Aremberg, with the Counts of Mansfeldt and Barlaimont, have been here some time, and the Counts of Horn and Egmont have but just arrived; they are already on the stairs."

"And Ibarra, Zerbelon, and Count Paciotti—are they there?"
"They are in attendance, my lord, and await your presence."

"Has the Burgomaster Stralen been brought prisoner from Antwerp?"

"No, my lord; the last news announces that he had made an attempt to escape, which Count Lodrone frustrated; more we have not heard, but suppose he will be brought here presently."

"And the secretary of the Count of Egmont, the Lord of Backerseel," demanded the duke—"has he been arrested, or have the villains suffered

him to escape also?"

"He is already captured, and without doubt will be sent hither in the

course of the day.'

"Then let Don Sanche Davila surround the house with his guard, and let no man be suffered to pass without an express order from me. Let several of my captains and brave Spaniards fill the rooms that lead to the council-chamber. Let no issue be left free; post guards at every entrance; have the chariots made ready, and the troops drawn up to escort these gentlemen to their places of confinement. Look to this, messires," said he, turning to his sons, "and let me know the moment that Stralen and Casembrot are brought in."

"This is well," said Alba, when he was once more alone. "I had some foolish scruples; but now I would go through it if it were twenty times as much! It will cool my blood," And hastily summoning his page, he

moved forward.

THE SHIPWRECKED.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

WE heard that he was drown'd-we heard no more; But our sad hearts conceived all him befel, Ere he was flung disdainful on the shore By haughty Ocean's death-rejecting swell-The thoughts that crowded the bewildered brain-The desperation, when the ship was lost-The shriek, that echoed o'er the stormy main When on it's waters the bruised frame was tost-The mortal agony of soul, the strife-The fierce contention with each 'whelming wave-The awful battle fought for active life Before the young accepts the passive grave-The young, the sanguine, home-awaited one. Oh! the soul sickens, and the eyes o'erflow, And through each fibre doth a shiv'ring run, Such as but chills in the extreme of woe, To think what he endured, what he bewailed, What longed to see, to hear, and to impart, In the brief moments ere remembrance failed, And dissolution quenched his glowing heart; The hopes destroyed, the proud ambition foiled-The years of banishment, for nothing spent-The ceaseless labours of his youth despoiled Of their legitimate, enforced intent-Wealth to obtain for those by fortune pinched-The mother, sister, they who ne'er complained-For that, for that, from peril he ne'er flinched: That was the aim his energies sustained-These were the thoughts o'er memory did sweep Like desolating wind, his soul to strip, Ere he sank lonely in his silent sleep, With yet a prayer for home upon his lip. What pitying hands, with reverential care, Composed the cold remains of unknown worth? Perchance some mother suffered him to share With child beloved the consecrated earth! What pitying eyes bedewed the pallid face With tears his mother was not nigh to shed, And hallowed with a prayer the burial-place Where Mercy haunts the precincts of the dead? Whoever did with matchless charity Such angel office piously fulfil, Is known above, is registered on high, Although below that debt is unpaid still! Sweet spirit! now from ev'ry storm secure, Reposing in the haven calm of peace, Whisper to us, whose grief will else perdure, Until both sorrow and existence cease! Oh! whisper to us, in our heavenward dreams, That present bliss rewards thy anguish past; And lo! as sunshine after tempest gleams, Will light succeed our bosom's boreal blast!

CHANGE.

BY MARGARET CASSON.

CHAPTER IV.

In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forest cast the leaf, And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief; Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that dear friend of ours, So gentle and so beautiful should perish with the flowers.

It is an often-spoken truism how fast time flies; but in a monotonous life, I appeal to you, does it not speed on wonderfully rapidly? Like an express-train it carries you on. Days whirl by and are turned into weeks, and weeks into months, making you breathless with the swiftness, if ever you attempt to look back, and think upon their flight; leaving no remembrance but that here was a sunny nook you passed, and there a dreary barren land. And so the days went by in Ida's quiet home. She had parted from him; and when that was over, no sound disturbed the solitude of her heart; she was not blithe now, she possessed not the free spirit she once had had; her eyes no longer were undimmed by woman's tears; "she had wept, and she had parted" now, and a new era in her life had begun, and she knew not what to think upon the future; she was for ever wondering if he were pining too. With the strange selfishness of love, since she was not with him to cheer, she would have preferred to know he was grieving for her, than being quite happy in her absence; the fair flower drooped its head beneath the dew which had fallen on it, and bowed itself to the earth. Alas! how often is it that we have sorrow from those from whom we ought to rejoice! Ida had a past now, and a "past is a memory of pain." Still, like all trials, it was not without some good effect; it made her more observant for others, and gave her deep sympathies with pain and care in other hearts; the kindest spirit cannot thoroughly enter into the suffering and sadness of another's burden, if its own life has flown in an uninterrupted sunshine of prosperity; it may be willing to share the grief of the distressed, but it cannot do it; none but the wretched can feel and console the wretched; none but the desolate can enter into the full meaning of desolation of spirit. If the waters of life have been to others but a sweet sunny fountain, pleasant to the sight, and good for food, how can they comprehend the throes of suppressed agony those endure who have quaffed the stream from a poisoned, bitter cup; none but their fellow-sufferers can know their untold anguish. Ida's naturally acute susceptibilities were painfully awakened now; the veil fallen from her eyes, she could interpret her mother's feelings more; she saw how ill Alice really was, and the shock this knowledge gave, coming so sudden and unprepared, had been very terrible to bear. And as the autumn days wore on, Alice grew openly worse; and Ida spent a sad contrasted time of anxious watchfulness and sorrowful thought in melancholy comparison to her once careless, bright existence. The death angel hovered over the mother in the act to strike

the blow, and the child quailed before the presence of the Unknown—the dreaded one! but the mother feared not to die, she had conquered earthly love and earthly fears now. One look, one last farewell, from the husband far away was all Alice craved to be granted to her; but, for some wise end, the desired boon was denied unto her. Perhaps, had he come, earth would have resumed its sway; to meet the parting with resignation would have been, with him present, impossible. At her mother's request Ida wrote to Richard Stanley, and he came. Strange, unfathomable destiny! he whom she slighted once, knelt by her side, and watched by her dying form; he whom she loved, was far, very far There was compensation, then; it is generally given to us some time or other in our life, even here below, for all we have suffered; though often a mournful, saddened comfort, still it comes, if we will but patiently wait for it. Subdued and softened, Richard Stanley saw the fleeting breath depart; the film of death fall over those dear eyes, where once "all his gladness, all his life, was hauging on their love;" through the hard earth clay, where it lay hidden, the early fondness he once had felt for her sprang as fresh as in those days when he had wooed her for his own. Ah! we may try to stifle our passion, we may lay it aside, may crush it, may believe it gone, but the one real love of the heart is burnt there as with an iron brand; it cannot be obliterated; it will not be destroyed. You may be parted from, you may relinquish of your own free will the being you really love; you may even deem you love another, and selfdeceiving and deceived go happily through life with that impression, but no one loves truly but once—once and for ever; and that love, sooner or later, he will feel was his only ordained and divine one. He felt much more in losing her, he, that cold, hardened, worldly man, in losing her who had been worse than nothing to him all his days, than when, by a like scene, he had stood watching his own loving wife quietly yielding up her gentle spirit; -but he did not feel thus, then.

And Alice "closed her sweet eyes calmly and without pain," and softly passed through the gloomy portals of death, from life into eternity; and Ida doubted whether happiness could ever beam on her again. I have not paused to tell the death-bed scene; my pen falls from my hand, unequal to the task. To those who have stood by and seen their beloved ones depart, no words are needed here; to those who have not done so, no words can speak the dread reverence of that hour. Others talk to me of the beauty of the dead; I cannot see it. The moment when the soul leaves its earthly tenement is an awe-striking thing to witness-it is fraught with a desolation to the mourner—of desolation and of terror too. Nor is the feeling dissimilar during the whole of "that first dark day of nothingness," when the dead is lying there, quiet, in the ghastly garments of the grave; when the hours go by, and bring with them no office to be done, no power of showing love and tender care for the being on whom so long our every thought has been expended; when the strength which has supported us through the long days of watching and illness gives way, and in feeling we have no longer the dying to bid be brave, our own courage is failing too, when we strive to say "God's will be done!" and feel how much the spirit wills to say it, yet how very weak When we look on the lineaments we have so fondly gazed on CHANGE. 179

formerly, and we see them so changed and altered, ere we can scarcely bear to see the marble coldness which has replaced the life. Oh, to me there is but little beauty or comfort then. It is afterwards the comfort comes-later the only beauty death can claim. Yes; when the repose has fallen on the features, when the full rigidness of death is there, when having seen it once, you can bear fixedly to look upon it again, prepared for what you will behold, on the altered features, the clay-cold form be-Then it is, then, for it speaks of rest and peace so forcibly; it reveals so thoroughly that there are joys far above this world; that I could gaze for ever there—I never could wish them back again when I have seen them thus. I have wished to die, and lie by their side often and often when I have looked on them-nay, I have felt it would be a blessed thing to die. I have never feared death half so much since I have witnessed it. I have stood by the lifeless form I have loved and tended through many a weary hour of pain and sickness, and when first I did so, it gave me a strange feeling of the reality of my loss; yet the sight soothed my sorrow too. And, still later, there is a something so holy and so blest in that calm coffin-lid, beneath which they lie; and there, and there alone do I see the beauty of the dead; it makes me feel the nothingness of this world, the hollowness, the mockery of all its strivings, when I think that this is the end of all. I could have remained by that coffin side for ever without a tear, feeling so thankful (great as was my loss of the kindest, truest heart that ever breathed) that the human life was removed from the carking, fretting cares of earth, impressed with a holy peace resulting from the view; for you feel you have indeed given them back to the God who made them, dust to dust and ashes to ashes, true; but the spirit is resting in the bliss of heaven, and heaven itself is dearer when those we have loved on earth are there! And so Ida felt it thus.

They buried her in the village churchyard, beneath the linden-trees, one peaceful autumn day-a day which harmonised well with their sorrowful hearts. The glow of the autumn tints were on the woods, as if a type of "the farewell beam of feeling past away," but there was no bright sunlight to mock their grief. It was indeed a day of "calm decay and peace divine," when the light was not clear nor dark. And Alice rested beneath the linden-trees, where in life she had said she so often wished to lie, and Ida stood by her mother's grave, and saw all that remained to her of one she so fondly loved bereft her, lowered into the silent tomb; and when all was done, and the funeral train turned to depart, she felt very vague and bewildered; a perfect chaos seemed her mind; they touched her hand as if to recal her thoughts, it was cold as the touch of the dead; she seemed chained to the grave, she felt she could not leave it. She had stood there tearless, as if turned to stone, whilst the last sad rites were proceeding, and now she stood watching the shadows moving from grave to grave, the clouds passing in the heavens, the little birds flitting from bough to bough, the insect in the grass, all seemed so full of life; and there, there where she clung the most was death—death visible to her view. She felt so very, very lonely now; no one to whom to outpour her sorrowful heart, to break the ice-chain which seemed cast around her.

Her uncle was very kind to her, but his love was not love enough. Oh, how she sighed for Dugald then; oh, how she felt one moment's sight of him-one word from his dear lips would comfort and console her. But she knew that could not be. Oh! blame her not, nor think her wish unfeeling, unnatural thinking of him then, and at such a time. In the hour of her grief a woman's heart invariably flies for comfort to the man she loves; the deeper her sorrow the stronger her love is felt; the more (if absent) she pines to behold him; at such an hour her thoughts dwell upon him, and him alone. Ah! the relief she feels it would bring to her if he could but be there, to clasp his hand silently, and feel its pressure in return!—the weight of sorrow it would remove from the overladen soul. Ida knew that he alone of all the world could teach her to be strong. But it was Ida's lot to learn to stand alone. This was but the beginning of sorrows, when she would have to endure alone and unsupported many a heavy blow. And she, formed by nature to confide and trust in others, to pine for sympathy and support, would have to give it, not receive it, until she would become so completely a thing apart, a solitary heart, she should marvel why Heaven had bestowed such deep powers of loving, such devoted ardent feelings, such a craving for affection on her, to be lavished, wasted upon nothingness, to prey upon themselves. There was much, besides that loved one, Ida Stanley buried in that grave.

And still the days went on. And the time drew nigh when the loved home must be abandoned, and another parting must be met. And Ida went through it all with a kind of desperation, feeling so intensely, until the very intensity numbed and froze her powers of sensation. A sort of stagnation of mind and susceptibility (I cannot describe it otherwise) seemed to hover over her. It appeared to Ida she was moving in a world of cloud and darkness; and the last day came—spent, when she looked back upon it afterwards, in so unsatisfactory, unfulfilled a manner. She wearied herself moving restlessly from spot to spot, visiting every place she knew, endeared by the spell of olden memories, speaking the farewell to all her favourite haunts, and feeling, when night came, how many she had forgotten, or had not seen enough, not looked at, with the long lingering look we bestow on all we look on for the last, last time; when we feel that to what we used to say it is, we are about to say it was. "Oh! that Had, how sad a passage 'tis!" Spending the rest of the evening in a craving, pining wish to see them once again, and say good-

by once more.

Worn out, she slept that night a heavy exhausted slumber, and woke to the actual day arrived. The day so long expected, yet so incapable to be realised until it did come; and still to move on in the same dreamlike way, with the wish to weep, and feeling she could not, that not a tear was there, repeating over and over again to herself, "I shall see you as my own no more," yet comprehending it not; checking the swelling sigh, and endeavouring to look cheerful and composed; leaving it at last, and knowing it was really done, and thinking all the while how indifferent and callous she appeared as she talked on; feeling oh! so sick at heart, so mournfully lonely whilst she did so, yet still in the same dreary, dream-like way. And so the day went by. And it was not until the following morning dawned, when Ida woke in her new strange home,

and felt she could not see the place, which for so long she had looked at as a thing of course, wish it as she may, felt that not one spot near her, however small, was consecrated by a memory of him she loved so well, not one where they had been together, not one that spoke of past happy days, as a token to tell her to remember him, and then Ida broke from her lethargic sleep, and many and bitter were the tears she shed. Heart-tears falling thick and fast, blinding her like rain. Yes, the first days Ida Stanley passed at Morley Court were days of untold wretchedness.

CHAPTER V.

A man's best things lie near him, Lie closest at his feet; It is the distant and the dim We go so far to meet.

It was in the young freshness of the spring-time that he left it; it was autumn—autumn rich, beautiful, and glowing with its warm golden depths of colouring, tinging earth and sky with a fulness of grave joy, when Dugald Annesley returned to Morley. Two years and a half had elapsed since he had quitted her; two years and a half since Eleanor Stanley had pledged her faith to his under the old thorn-trees in Morley Park; and now the wanderer had come again. On the fair face of nature beamed the smile of satisfied content—the completeness from her toil had been achieved. She rested from her labour; but to the unquiet human heart what repose was there? How was it with him?-with her? pondering thus, Dugald Annesley stood, thoughtful, gazing on the rich masses of the waving corn, amongst whose bright harvest and the "red blue flowers" glided the sunshine, and amidst the golden ears played the merry breezes as they bent as if in laughing homage to the wandering wind. He had arrived, the long absent one, but the preceding evening to his early home. Impatiently pining for this hour, ardently desiring for the time when space should no longer spread its barrier between the parted, how had he fretted beneath the delays which had hitherto retarded his return; and now that he has come, now that he is actually on his way to Morley Court, why stands he loitering there, rather than hasten to the presence of the loved one, as loving heart ever should? Until he came to Morley, and found himself once more breathing the same air, mingling in the old associative spots, he had felt no fears, nay, in absence he had dwelt upon his own love for her, until the measure of her love for him had scarce been noted or considered, the balance thereof was thoroughly untried.

It was not that he disregarded or unvalued the young heart given to him—ah! no, it was his choicest blessing, "the very echo of his soul;" but I can quite comprehend how that, with the vehement devotion he felt for her, it might be so. "If it sound strangely to thine ear, 'tis that the soul intenslier doth range self-limited, and brood but on its one." And so he had rested, content without anxiety upon his own deep-rooted heart-worship for her, and dreaming that it was her love for him with which, as upon a concomitant feeling, he was communing, as

in the flights of imagination he rose soaring into the clouds on wings of happiness above the common earth. The time seemed strangely long in the retrospect, but it had passed so quickly, he half felt tempted to quarrel with himself that the hours away from her had not been more lingering in their flight; but, after all, had they not been all spent as in her presence? had he not worked for her? had she ever been absent from his thoughts? Eleanor was right when she said he was ambitious, he needed but the impulse to rouse his soul to action; and when she gave it to him, he had proved himself good knight and true, and borne her colours bravely through many a hard-fought fight. His college career had been a glorious one; he had now chosen as his profession one for which his wondrous abilities admirably befitted him to fill. To become a member of the English bar was his great ambition; and here again, in the eagerness of his soul, shouting the Eureka, that deep-rousing cry wrung prophet-like from the strong heart, his daring mind boldly steeped life 'mid the glories of the future, and the present was treated as a thing of naught. "L'homme est ainsi bâti quand un sujet l'entraine, l'impossibilité disparait à son âme." And, upborne thus at the very moment of reunion, can he faulter? Ah! the icy hand of Time had come between, and the truest heart, the most trusting confidence, can scarce avoid feeling some pangs of fear, some tremulous beating of the nerves, when about to meet again the dear ones from whom absence has long separated them; and Dugald had heard but little of Eleanor during those weary months of parting. And now he hears how beautiful she is, how flattered, how admired, of her father's pride in her, of the village tale that Lord Arlingford's young heir loves her well, and how Mr. Stanley encourages his suit, and deems his fortune not amissly would ameliorate his own impoverished acres. And does the young heart sicken with foreboding fears? does the dread of coming ill already blanche the cheek, and chill the fire of the young existence? Dugald Annesley never could tell me what were his feelings then. It was so varied, so changeful a train of thought, his only clear idea standing forth amid this chaos of confusion, the burning impatience for the coming morrow, when, with his own eyes, he might again behold her, and know the worst, or learn with blissful certainty that Eleanor was true to him.

"Not at home." Mr. and Miss Stanley both from home; and not likely to return for some days? It was truly very vexatious, after waiting so long, to have the mind first harassed by disquieting reports, and then to meet with fresh disappointment at every step; but Fortune occasionally delights thus to torment those who think they deserve least such treatment at her hands. Miss Ida Stanley, however, was at home, if Mr. Annesley would wish to see her. Ah, well, there was some little comfort in that, certainly; he might learn some little intelligence of Eleanor; and, moreover, the thought of Ida always rested in Dugald's mind imbued with some degree of romantic associations. "Yes; Mr. Annesley would like to see Miss Ida Stanley very much." And so Mr. Annesley was ushered in due form into the drawing-room of Morley Court, into the which there had been a time when no ushering had been required, but Mr. Annesley came and went as he listed; but then he had been absent two years now. Ah! Time, Time! the shifting of the sands

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in your hour-glass makes sad shifting in the measurings of life! Ida was sitting there-alone, dreamingly unoccupied. Certainly a book was in her hand, but the volume hung idly down, totally disregarded. Truth to tell, Ida was slightly fond of visionary dreaming. Some of those dear, good, exemplary females, who, with the fidgety activity of the celebrated "busy bee," deem the standard of all, "the improving of each shining hour," to consist in laborious toil, and who imagine hands one moment idle must be satanical instruments of mischief, would shake their heads gravely and ominously at the mention of Ida Stanley's name, as they industriously bent over their own intricate useless yards of crochet edgings, and such like skilful buildings for their cells! But I cannot agree with them; for I believe, did we all waste more time in Ida's fashion, it would be the better for us. The whole world now is so bepuzzled and bewildered with the American-originating go-ahead mania, that the summum bonum of the excellence of all things now, consists in the railroad rapidity with which they can be accomplished, and repose is rather looked upon in this locomotive age as the bête-noire of existence.

Now, without wishing to return to the old stage-coach travelling of our ancestors, it is pleasant occasionally to bide a wee moment at the wayside inn, to rest awhile from our long day's journey. It is pleasant, and good too; for in the whirl and bustle of the travel we become confused, and mightily materialised. The fair Ideal, that heaven-born gift to earth, forgotten and deserted, bids fair to sink exhausted, worn with the length and toil of the way, beneath the cold neglect of an unspiritual world; the bright star Fancy, which illumined with its rays the living mind of man, now beams faintly o'er the dying love for the lofty and the beautiful; the child of the skies abandons with disdain the heart stifled by the pressure of earth, and its mean, petty aspirations; and if never considered, she will bid farewell to the unprizing possessor, and once lose her, she is lost to him for ever, and with her loss fades from

the man his higher powers, his divine affinity.

Dream on, then, sweet Ida, and cherish, 'mid this working-day world, in one kind heart, she who is named by him her most ardent worshipper, the "exalter as consoler." Dream on, Ida, for your dreams are pure and true; and when the moment comes when action is required, there will not be a firmer or a stronger heart beating here below than in the gentle breast of Ida Stanley. Dream on, Ida, and bear the image of your native heaven impressed upon your soul-the peace, the grateful charm, the gift of contemplation, diffusing its spirit-light over your woman's mind. But it is no dream now, Ida—he is come—he is standing before you in no vision now; it is himself—the veritable form of Dugald Annesley, whom once more you behold; for the nonce, dream on no more, Ida-or rather dream, for "waking dreams are fatal." And, oh! the tell-tale blush, the low joyous greeting with which Ida hastened to receive him, the pleasure she evinced at beholding the old familiar face in the stranger's land in which she dwelt, and he, the ungrateful one, the whole time his thoughts dwelt but upon Eleanor. With that wondrous faculty he possessed, of creating a life for himself within common life, he was often blind to much that passed around him. It had never even momentarily occurred to him that it was possible that Ida might, unconsciously to herself, care for him; that his character was the very one which, to her gifted imaginative temperament, would possess the power most to enthral her love; and that, in the intimate companionship circumstances had engendered between them, she might become the sufferer. As he had told Eleanor, there was no fear of his forgetting her—his whole life was a reflection of her image; and, indeed, there was that exclusive oneness in his love for her, that no rival could hold even a temporary place in the heart which she so entirely occupied; and thus armed with an invincible shield, he forgot that from the world the head was turned which should change all to stone; and so, unwillingly and unwittingly,

he had made poor Ida very miserable.

But Ida felt very happy now, and could scarce conceal the tremulous gladness his presence had called forth; and then it was so grateful to her warm heart to hear of all her old haunts and village friends, which he had seen so much later than she had left them; she had so much to ask, and he to tell; and then she spoke of Eleanor, and in his turn it was so pleasant to be the listener now, and it was so dear to thought to be there, and to feel she had such a little while since been in that very room, and to see all the well-remembered objects which spoke so forcibly of past vanished hours. "And where was Eleanor?" At Lord Arlingford's; she and Mr. Stanley had gone to spend the week there; but even that brought no pang now. His spirit felt fortified against any village gossip; the sight of Morley Court had made him very brave again. "And he should meet her then," he told Ida, "for he and his uncle were asked to dinner there that very day. And why was not Ida there also?" "It was a gay party assembled there, a very large party, and so soon, she did not feel she could go there." And she looked so sad then, and so spirit-like in her heavy black mourning dress, he felt how much the solitary orphan had endured since he had last beheld her; and besides, there was that indescribable likeness to Eleanor flitting over her at that moment; and so he stayed on yet a longer time talking of the past, and speaking of her mother; and Ida, won to confidence by his soothing words of comfort, spoke gently of her sorrow, of her present life of loneliness, of her grief-untold before. Poor Ida! it was so blessed a relief to talk to one who knew that angel mother dead, and loved and reverenced her memory. And when at length he left her, Ida still dreamed on, laying up for herself stores of future misery; and Dugald Annesley wandered to the hawthorn-trees, and he dreamed too beneath their shade. Well! be it so. As sings the old Gaelic song unto us,

I am asleep, don't waken me!

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

V

SCARCELY had the Templar turned from Flamel's door, when the sound of horses' hoofs warned him that the night-watch was approaching. In order to avoid the gleam of their lanterns and their prying eyes he struck into a by-street whose issue was unknown to him, and, nothing daunted by the boisterous state of the weather, pursued his route as best Not a star twinkled through space to direct his course northward; and but for a lamp flickering, here and there, in a niche before some holy image, and the faint light which the moon, at rare intervals, cast upon some quaint and projecting gable, the town was wrapped in the most complete darkness. Numerous false turnings, through which it was next to a miracle how he found his way, kept him within the city walls until, to his impatience, the hours seemed to fly. At last the gates were reached—a short colloquy ensued between the knight and one of the guard, evidently on the look-out for him—the wicket was cautiously opened, and D'Aulnoy hastened onward until Beaubourg, St. John of Laterad, and the Abbey of St. Martin des Bois lay behind him, and the huge mass of the Temple was guessed at, rather than seen, as it made the darkness more dense.

Hitherto the knight had risked nothing but a chance encounter with some pillard, high or low, in the exercise of his unlawful vocation—a hazard which he would rather have courted than avoided; but as he neared the fortress, though all was known ground, and for him every shadow had its form and every void an outline, he halted, peering anxiously and keenly around and listening attentively. Not the faintest sounds disturbed the profound stillness; the lights glimmering from the watch-tower and guard-room alone indicating aught of life about the vast and silent pile.

"All's right," thought D'Aulnoy, "and my misgivings were but chimeras of the brain; the storm, too, has abated, and my cousin squire is, I hope, faithful at his post. Confound this murky darkness, how shall I avoid falling into the fosses! and Eudes will not, for his very life, venture with a lantern in the very teeth of the sentinels—at least I hope

the boy will have more sense."

But as the knight was about to seek the small postern through which he hoped to effect an entrance, his anxiety was renewed by a sudden gleam of light which came and went, at intervals, from the imposing front of the principal edifice. The Temple consisted of many detached buildings, flanked with towers and turrets, forming an aggregate of different structures necessary to the comforts, wants, regulations, and, above all, the defence of its numerous and formidable occupants. It was

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at once a small city and a small state; sufficient to itself in all things, from those connected with the lofty aspirations of our nature to the ordinary necessities of life. The church and the cemetery, the altar where the vows were spoken, the grave which for the most part alone cancelled them, the tilting yard and the council-chamber, the shambles and the granaries, the well-stocked stables, the constructions containing the mason's trowel and shovel, the armourer's anvil, and the weaver's loom were inclosed within its boundaries; where, with the threatening and all-powerful system of isolation, even the meanest offices were performed by none but were sworn to the Order, and, though debarred from knighthood, could be occasionally summoned to its defence. the intricacies of those premises was Almeric d'Aulnoy thoroughly acquainted. He could tell whence came the neighing of some restless steed, and where the midnight lamp burnt before an altar; and well did he know that the lights now glimmering through the windows of the main building and its flanking turrets, were borne along the gallery leading to the chamber set aside for the ceremonies of the Order.

What could the knights be assembled for that night, when during the day all had been quiet? Was it to take cognisance of some recently discovered transgression? If so, who the transgressor? And the heart that would have leaped at the hope of combat stood still within the bosom of the guilty Templar. He had doubtless been sought for in his room—for though a junior, and not yet tried in the field, the grand master loved him well—had been missed, and the penalty of his fault would await him on his return! Should he not fling away the white cloak rather than have it torn from his shoulders? From these reflections he

was roused by a low voice at his elbow.

"Cousin Almeric, are you there? Speak, for St. Bernard's sake—is

"Rash boy! how dared you venture so far?"

"Had I not found you all would have been discovered; but it is not

yet too late. Come—for Heaven's sake lose not a moment!"

Apprehension lent wings to Almeric and his squire. They gained the postern, cautiously opened and closed it again, and reached the range of buildings where they lodged in time to answer in person the second impatient summons to join the chapter thus suddenly convoked.

D'Aulnoy's step was not so steady as usual, nor his bearing so bold, as he gained the gallery, where two knights, laggards like himself, met him

at the entrance.

"Ha! thanks to Bafomet!" exclaimed one, in tones he meant to be light and unconcerned, but which in reality were tremulous with excitement, "here is our truant at last; so all is safe, and right too, I hope."

"Right or wrong, Flexian, as time shall prove. But what is all this

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"St. Bernard alone knows," said the other knight, with a strongly marked and peculiar accent that betrayed the Italian, "what foolish

whim he has blown into old Molay's brain."

"Nothing against the grand master, or D'Aulnoy fires up," whispered he whom Almeric had called Flexian. "But come, we have loitered as long as we dared to give you time to join us, Almeric; we must not tarry a moment longer."

"The night walk must have been pleasant," observed the Italian. "I dreaded, lest rather than brave it, you would sleep in Paris."

"Breathe it not, Noffodei; the very thought is destruction," muttered

the former speaker.

Wearied, agitated, apprehensive lest the dry cloak he had hastily thrown over his wet robe might not altogether disguise the state of the latter habiliment from the keen eyes of his superiors, Almeric followed in silence his two associates; and last of those who had been invited to the chapter, the culprit entered the council-chamber. He and Noffodei took their station at the lower end of the hall, but Flexian strode on till he came to the division where the knight commanders sat, and took

possession of a vacant chair.

There were present at that time in the Temple of Paris, to do honour to the grand master on his return to Europe, almost all the knights-commanders in France, and many from England, Spain, and Germany, eager to crowd around their chief, and mark the turn which the affairs of the Order were likely to take under the management of one whose great age, knightly achievements, and irreproachable life, entitled him to be looked up to with deference and respect, rather than with confidence and hope; his experience having made him more familiar with the camp than with the council, and better acquainted with the intrigues of the East than with those of the Western world, which he had not visited for a long lapse of years.

The Order was, indeed, most critically situated; and it required all the energy and genius of some strong political head to maintain advantages so multifarious and brilliant as to excite the jealousy of those

powers who might suppose themselves sufferers by them.

The crusades, after having drained Europe of men and money, had, by a fatal series of errors, jealousies, doubts, and perfidies on the part of the Christians, and by an undeviating adherence among the Asiatic princes, to that main source of all strength, union and unity of purpose, terminated in the complete triumph of the latter over the former, and the final evacuation of Palestine by the soldiers of the Cross. The kingdom of Jerusalem, that last fragment of Christian romance in the East, which might have proved, with a little more earnestness and good-will, so splendid a reality, was scattered to the winds; and the weak unhappy being on whose head that shadowy crown still rested, as if in very mockery, had fled to the island of Cyprus, where the broken remnant of the Christian armies that had fought and bled in Syria flocked around him, totally at a loss in what manner to decide upon their future course.

The three military orders, the Teutonic Knights and those of St. John and of the Temple, which rose in the East with no other aim than that of aiding in the conquest of the Holy Land and of protecting the pilgrims that flocked to its shrines, had gradually, from insignificant communities, grown into formidable bodies. The latter especially not only extended and strengthened themselves in Europe, but, proud of their privileges and their power, assumed an arrogant position in proportion to their increasing prosperity. Europe had rung with reports of their hair-brained valour and exploits in war; and in exact ratio as these were cried up by the ardent spirits of the time were the Templars' objects of suspicion and dislike to the Western princes who, upon the breaking up of the

Christian domination in the East, saw them with apprehension recoil upon their territories. The Teutonic Knights had still a field open to them in the north of Europe, through the paganism of Prussia and the Baltic provinces; the Knights Hospitallers had, by a master-stroke of policy, cast their eyes upon the island of Rhodes, where, if they no longer opposed the Crescent in Asia, they could, at least, protect the southern coast of Europe from Moslem depredations; but the Templars, the original aim of their creation being neutralised by circumstances, had failed to chalk out a fresh one for themselves, remaining in their rich consis-

tories enjoying the present and idly canvassing the future.

The Pope had, indeed, invited the grand masters of the three Orders to Avignon, whither, for certain reasons, he had removed his pontifical throne, to discuss the situation of affairs in the East with reference to the Christian world in general, and to their own interests in particular. Jacques Molay, grand master of the Templars, had arrived with pomp and splendour, bringing with him a brilliant retinue to escort the treasures of the Order, which he transferred from his stronghold in Cyprus to the keep of the Temple at Paris, exciting jealousy and awakening cupidity in no ordinary degree, whilst the two other grand masters had appeared before the Pope without money and unattended. The sequel showed how great was their foresight; and how happy it had been for the trusting victim of avarice and duplicity had he judged his Christian brethren with a little more of Eastern measure.

At the upper end of the spacious hall, whose groined and pointed arches were lost in gloom, sat Jacques Molay under a snow-white canopy, against the draperies of which, and the white Templar's robe, his silver locks and beard of venerable length could scarcely be traced, whence he surveyed the assembly he had that night gathered around him. Age had not bent his figure, which was of unusual height, but had stamped it with its peculiar rigidity. His arm seemed still strong for combat; but the lustre of past years had fled his sunken eye. The vigour of thought contracted not his blanched brows. The features bore traces of past beauty of outline; but the work of years of toil and danger under the broiling sun of Asia was visible in the earthy tones of the head and hands. His aspect reminded the gazer of those hoary hills wrapped in eternal snows when the evening is closing over them. The evening of life descended on the brow of the warrior, not smiling in the last tints of

a dying sun, but already cold in its shadows.

On the right of Jacques Molay sat Guy d'Auvergne, Commander of Normandy, his brother in arms, second only to himself in the Order. There were many points in common between them. Of equally illustrious birth, the former being of the house of Burgundy, and the latter brother to the reigning Dauphin of Auvergne, the same unflinching valour, purity of life, single-mindedness, and fervent piety distinguished them both; reciprocal qualities which, together with their having shared all the vicissitudes and disasters of Eastern warfare, had ripened their friendship into the strongest and most brotherly affection. Both had devoted their whole life to the Order, which the Dauphin had entered, contrary to rule, at the early age of eleven, and endowed with so large a fortune as to account satisfactorily for the exception made in his favour. Guy d'Auvergne's countenance, bronzed by

exposure and strongly marked by nature, had, when not under excitement, an expression of stern repose not unmixed with melancholy.

On the left of the grand master sat a man, the slight variation in whose costume indicated the clerical profession. For the privilege the Templars most prided themselves upon, and had, indeed, most reason to prize, as tending more than aught else to concentrate their power, was that of possessing a clergy of their own. Although in a community where feats of arms were alone regarded with respect, and the almost fabulous courage of its members inspired them with contempt for those whose stricter calling debarred them from military achievements, this personage's exalted birth and superior intelligence established his dignity in the Temple. Peter of Boulogne, proctor of the Order, was long past the prime of life, of diminutive and spared proportions, and pinched and shrivelled features; but his piercing eye and shrewd smile betrayed how keen a spirit lay watching behind so insignificant a portal.

Below D'Auvergne sat, according to precedence and rank, the dignitaries who always attended the grand master; namely, the seneschal who officiated as his vicar; the marshal to whom was entrusted the famous beauseant; the treasurer; the preceptor of Cyprus, upon whom had devolved the most important of the duties and privileges which formerly belonged to the preceptor of Jerusalem; the master of the Turcopoliers,

or light cavalry, and others of minor offices.

Next to Peter of Boulogne all the eminent priests and clerks took their places. The few knights immediately after these parties had the steady, composed mien and thoughtful eye of men who had grappled long and successfully with their enemies, especially those within their own breasts, who had been tried in many ways and found true. They were as motionless as though they had been effigies of bronze, their adust complexions contrasting strangely with their white habiliments. Then came a set with hair glossy as the raven's wing, whose impatient looks clearly showed that experience had not cooled the ardour of their youth, followed by some still more juvenile young men who had not shared in the ordeal of Palestine, from which untoward events, as it now seemed, for ever debarred them; among these, most striking in person and most favoured by his superiors, was Almeric d'Aulnoy.

Here and there the golden or reddish hue of a moustachio, a form cast in a colossal mould, a look somewhat heavy or ruminating, betrayed a northern offshoot of the same mighty tree that extended and ramified all over Europe, or a darker shade, a more astute eye, pointed out a southern sapling. On the whole, a more imposing sight could hardly have been pictured by the imagination than these men, whose determined spirit was stamped on every lineament, whose martial air and strict habits of discipline imparted to the assembly, whilst they thus awaited in motionless silence the grand master's communication, a dignity which exalted the simple woollen robe and red cross above the ermined purple of the

proudest baron of that age.

The eyes of the elders did not greet the late comers with a glance of recognition, yet Almeric felt certain he had not escaped their notice. Under that impression his own looks sought the ground, and he felt as though the hidden document in his vest had by some unknown power become visible to all present.

"We are now complete in number," said the seneschal.

The grand master rising, all the knights followed his example

"Dear brethren," he said, in somewhat hoarse tones, "let us, according to our wont, implore Divine grace to purify our hearts and guide our counsels."

With head inclined on his breast, and averted form, the grand master was for a few minutes absorbed in meditation; all imitated his attitude, the priests excepted, who knelt and clasped their hands in prayer. a sign from Jacques Molay, the seneschal then opened the proceedings.

"Brothers," he said, "the grand master on this particular occasion dispenses with the usual religious exercises, inasmuch as time presses; but each is recommended to make amends for this omission in his private

devotions. Are there brothers set without to watch?"

Several of the younger knights rose to ascertain if this precaution, usual on all such occasions, but considered indispensable when the high dignitaries of the Order and its head were present, had been taken. All the issues from the hall, as well as the galleries and passages leading to it, were guarded by frères servants, that no eavesdropper might, by any accident, gain access to them; and as the great bell that generally summoned the brothers to council had not been sounded, but each knight had been called up singly, there was a chance of that night's chapter escaping the knowledge of the uninitiated. But when Almeric beheld about him so many knights of his own standing, who, unlike himself, had never enjoyed the confidence of the elders, he could not imagine the possible aim of this solemn convocation. The grand master, however, in a few words, made the mystery clear.

"No ordinary motive has induced me to call you together this night, my brethren," he said. "It is not to agitate the minor interests of our Order—not to discuss the reception of some new brother—not for the holy and purifying duty of confession and general absolution, nor to judge and visit with punishment some refractory member of our brotherhood. It is for graver, holier purposes still that I call on all present by the vows that bind them, by their knightly honour, by the scutcheons of their forefathers-spotless, or they were not admitted to wear the spotless mantle—by all that a Templar or a noble holds dear, to enter with heart and soul into this night's debate, on which so much of vital import to our Order may hang. Have I your attention, my children?"

Every hand was placed on the breast, and every head bent low. "Our Lady knows," continued the old man, "I am but a poor scholar and no clerk; but, oh! my brothers, would that the soul's eloquence could stream conviction from my lips, and that every heart beneath the red cross, like mine, beat for that cross alone. It is to the present situation of our Order-the dangers that threaten it-the means by which such may be averted, that I would now call your attention—what do I say? your zeal !- all the energy and power which you possess, and which you have voluntarily devoted to the service of the Temple. You, my children, should be the more wholly devoted to the prosperity of our Order that, unlike the lazy drones of monks who are condemned to inglorious sloth, often before judgment is awakened, you entered upon a life of toil and peril at a time when both have attraction for man. You knew the world which you renounced; and though we have no noviciate, is not the school

of knighthood sufficient to prepare any youth for the duties of our Order? Many whom I even now behold have been squires in our house for years, and learnt among us the gentle craft ere you pronounced the vows that bind you. Hearts thus willingly offered ought surely to belong to us exclusively. Therefore, dear brethren, will I open myself to you without reserve, although there be some here who have never been trusted or tried before. Nay, to them especially would I appeal! Messires, messires," continued the old man, with increasing warmth, his huskiness gradually clearing away, and his tones becoming stronger and louder with excitement, "it is to you, the young and the thoughtless, that I now address myself. Every fault committed in the hot blood of youth-every error, however trifling-every infringement of our rules may, in our present critical position, become a pitfall unto the whole Order. You, my children, who have never yet seen the beauseant wave on high, or dyed it with your blood, may stain it with your follies! By our Lady, I could weep like a weak child to think that you have such power! His holiness, as many of you are aware, called me from Cyprus to advise upon certain reforms in our Order, which it were my greatest glory to connect with my name. But, my brethren, our soverign lord the Pope, thinking it would further the plan he still cherishes of re-establishing the Christian power in the East, is urgent to unite the two Orders, whose rivalry he imagines has been injurious to its cause, in one mighty body—he proposed to me, the grand master of the Templars, to merge our Order in that of St. John."

A burst of indignation here interrupted the venerable speaker; and though at an authoritative sign from the dauphin, silence was restored, the younger knights, ignorant, until that moment, of the grave questions that had agitated the elders for months past, continued to glance fiercely

around, proving how home had gone the blow.

"Yes, my children," continued Jacques Molay, "our wealth was to swell their wealth—our strength to increase their strength—our glory to exalt their glory. By our Lady's mercy I averted so great a calamity. Rather exchange our pure habiliments for the black robes of penitent monks than for the cloaks of the Hospitallers—such was my answer."

A low murmur of applause went round, and the knights devoutly

crossed themselves in thankfulness for the peril they had escaped.

"The storm," resumed the grand master, "has blown over-the skies are once more serene; but let us so trim our sail that no contrary wind or drifting current drive the noble vessel aground. Now is the time, if ever, by strict adherence to our rules, by the most perfect understanding among ourselves, by severe and timely reform, if not to disarm, at least to baffle the malice of our enemies. We, who have spent our lives in the East battling day by day, yielding the ground inch by inch, and that only to odds too fearful for mortal arm to cope withal, know little or nothing of what passes in Europe. We return to find our name attacked by the foulest imputations; to hear lewdness, drunkenness, oppression, the lowest vices, the greatest derelictions imputed to us! And, brethren!" the old man raised his voice with the animation which had made it loudest on the battle-field, till it re-echoed beneath that vaulted roof like rolling thunder, and he struck his clenched hand on the table that groaned beneath the heavy blow as if the boards were about to part asunder. "Brethren, were it but calumny, we should know how to repel the infamous accusations, and so blast the hounds that dared to breathe them, they ne'er should utter aught of the kind again on earth! Were it the foulest lie I could rest content; but I hear from those whose word is sacred, that there is but too much foundation for these charges. Speak, Hughes de Peralde—repeat before the assembled knights what you have poured into my private ear; and you, Raoul de Gisi; and you, Goneville—speak your minds like true and noble knights."

The grand visitor and prior of France, Hughes de Peralde, rose. His manner was not so impassioned as the grand master's; but there was in his whole aspect a chilling severity which, if it spoke less to the

feelings of the assembly, awed more.

"What I have spoken but too often, and ever in vain, I am ready to speak again, even though my words fall as idly on the ear as if they were spoken to the winds. In Cyprus we do our duty. In Spain we help gallantly to lay the Crescent. In Germany, as our grand prior the noble Wildgraf Frederick has often assured me, the knights follow not only the dead letter but the spirit that vivifies our Order, and brought it to its present eminence—the brothers live strictly confined to their Temple houses, and mix not with the world without; their lives are regular. Is it not so, noble Wolf of Todenwardt?"

The German commander bowed his head.

"You, Stephan of Stappelbrugge," continued the grand visitor, speak well of your Flanders preceptories, and I hear not of great evils in England, although our English brothers here present, Ralph de Burton, Walter Clifton, Tony of Thurlsby, and Brian le Jay, are bearers of some complaints from Thomas More. But in France, as in the course of my duty I visited consistory after consistory, I made but too many disagreeable discoveries. The moneys of the Temple have been squandered; receptions have taken place without due caution, in some instances contrary to rule; the younger knights have given way to worldly habits which they profess to renounce; and, alas! that I should say it, vices are not wanting among them that would disgrace their names under any circumstances. Proud am I to except from censure the commanderies of my noble brothers of Normandy and Aquitaine, which have ever given brilliant examples of discipline. But the chief evil lies here in our house The spending the nights beyond the Temple walls, despite the vigilance of the superiors; drunken brawls in low places"—here the dark look of the grand visitor rested by turns on many of the younger knights -" quarrels within the Temple itself; the striking of squires of gentle blood, doing service of their own free choice; the holding of disorderly meetings within our very houses; the chatting at all times and places, although silence and secrecy be the very corner-stone of the Temple silence which beseems man's dignity, and secrecy his prudence; such are the irregularities by which our brothers of France make our name a byword and a handle for the malice of our enemies; and unless reform be introduced by vigorous measures, matters will not mend, for vain are appeals to the conscience of those who, if they had any, would need none!"

Hughes de Peralde pronounced these last words with bitterness, and sat down with the air of one who feels it necessary to curb his rising anger. The Preceptor of Aquitaine was expected to speak next; but he waived

his right in favour of the commander Raoul de Gisi. Like the last speaker, the countenance of this individual was grave unto sternness, and

his address firm and composed.

"I am grieved," he said, "that I must confirm, although, had it been in my power I would so gladly have repelled, the charges of the grand visitor of France. And sorry am I that even the youngest and most inexperienced amongst our brethren should allow themselves such license, that even in the idlest forms of conversation they should commit themselves. If the Church deem deserving of her censure the vain oaths and idle asseverations in general use among the nobles of France—'By my father's soul!' or, 'By my own soul!' 'By the Lord's Passion!' and many more to the same purpose-how shall we endure those which are never out of our young Templars' mouths; such as, 'By Bafomet!'our clerks say it should be Mahomet; however, we all know the false prophet of the Saracen hounds is thus alluded to, although the uninitiated may well imagine it an appeal to the fiend himself. Again, 'By Mahound!'-pretty much to the same effect-'By the Houris!' and many more such ejaculations which, natural as they may seem to the Eastern sojourner, must sound pagan in the ears of the untravelled listener. But these inadvertencies are not all. There be those among us who, after distinguishing themselves by glorious deeds in Holy Land, thoughtlessly bring back with them, and introduce into the Western nurseries, where our young saplings grow, all the tricks of the camp, and seek to while away the tediousness of repose by reciting the wild tales wherewith they were in the habit of diverting themselves in the east-Saracen legends, dressed out in Frankish forms, to amuse and often to mislead the unwary. Even the elder knights are not ashamed to gab, as they call it (I suppose a softening word for lie), and bandy fables with the young. I need not say how many hearts are averted from us by such absurd follies as these, or allude to the danger we incur should they reach the ears of strangers to our Order, who, ignorant of their origin, may thereby well mistake us rather for dogs of Palestine than sober Christians."

"If reproach be cast," exclaimed the impetuous Esquin de Flexian, Prior of Montfaucon, starting up without awaiting his turn to speak, "let us look for it rather in the East, whence our misconduct has driven us, than in the West, where everything smiles on us. You talk of the laxity with which we observe our rules, of our mixing with the good Christians around us, but what may not we in turn say of the intrigues, the lukewarmness that lost us our possessions in Holy Land, of our constant and unchristian bickerings with the Knights Hospitallers. I speak here only of our errors of judgment—I mention not our crimes. I bring not to mind the shameful defections of many a Hughes of Nipurias, who flung the white cloak and the red cross to Mahound, and embraced the crescent. I know well my preceptory of Montfaucon was thought but poorly of by the grand visitor, and his looks tell me, even now, but too plainly how bitterly he regards my own conduct at all times and in all places; but I retort the blame. Look to your doings in the East,

brethren, ere you judge us too severely in the West."

The deep silence that followed this burst of vindictive feeling was so prolonged and so chilling, that conscious how deeply he had committed himself before his superiors not only in dignity but in blood, and that

too in the presence of the younger knights, Flexian felt abashed and mortified. In vain did he seek support in the livid countenance of Noffodeia, or in Almeric d'Aulnoy's averted eyes; and he bit his lip with vexation till the blood started from it.

Guy d'Auvergne, after permitting this embarrassing pause to last sufficiently to impress upon Flexian the impropriety of which he had been

guilty, rose in his turn.

"Far be it from me, my dear brethren," he said, "to deny that we committed grave errors in the East, for which some excuse may be found in the hardships we endured, exposed as we were to continual warfare with cruel and numerous foes. But if a few craven knights, knowing that our vow prohibits us from paying a brother's ransom by anything more valuable than a knife or a belt, became apostates to avoid a certain and a horrid death, how many might we not name who died the glorious death of martyrs for the cross they wore. You point at the few blots on our scutcheon, regardless of its brilliant quarterings. Fie! my brother, be these true or loyal feelings? But let the past sink behind us, and turn we our eyes to the future. If we have brought to light manifold errors, be it but to obliterate them. Let us lay aside all heartburnings and discontent. Let the experienced overlook error in the young, and the young amend their ways. Reform is necessary—it should be anticipated by zeal. If the spirit of rivalry we have indulged in with the Knights Hospitallers conduced to the evil issue of our Asiatic affairs, let harmony and unity among ourselves cement our strength, whilst we strive with might and main to build up in the West the Temple which has fallen in

the East. How say you, reverend brother?"
"I am of opinion," said Peter of Boulogne, seizing upon that part of the dauphin's speech which best suited his views, "that the same jealousy which lost us in Asia will, if we be not watchful, undermine our possessions in Europe. I consider the peril of our position far too imminent and pressing to be counteracted by any measures of reform whatever. Not if we reduced our Order to its primitive simplicity-not if our knights rode two on one horse, as in the time of blessed Payan, our founder, could we blind or disarm the vigilant jealousy of the powers of the West. Hope it not, my brethren. The clergy will never forgive the grants we have from Rome, and the rights conferred on us by the blessed bull Omne datum Optimum. Not only are we enfranchised from all obedience to them-not only are our rich preceptories and extensive lands free from their control, but we levy tithes instead of paying them. Think not such a loss to their exchequer can ever be overlooked. The kings in whose realms we spread, but who cannot subject us to their sway, how think you to conciliate them? By yielding up our power? this we will not-by blinding them to it? this we cannot do. Our position, as our reverend father truly observed, is critical. Palestine lost to us-Arragon wrenched from us-Cyprus, after having been bought by us with hard gold from the Lion-Hearted Richard of England, by an unpardonable weakness sold again, we are thrown back upon our European possessions, where our youths, having no manly perils to encounter, no bracing exercise of arms, sink into a cloistral repose for which they are neither fitted nor prepared. The Teutonic knights have yet the pagans of the northern coast to conquer; those of Spain and Portugal the Moors; our rivals, the Knights Hospitallers, are about to make themselves at Rhodes a bulwark for the south of Europe against the piratic Moslems. All these are yet useful—a great point, my brethren. But we, the Templars of France, what is henceforth our object? We have Our commanderies become convents-our knights drones. Bend not angry brows on me, my brothers—I seek to throw light on our perils but to point out in what manner to evade them. It is not too late. Cyprus may yet be to us what Rhodes will, ere long, be to the Hospitallers. Let us, with all speed, transport thither the treasures of our Order, our grand master, our wealth, and our headlong youths, leaving none in our French houses, especially those of Paris and Marseilles, our chief points in the West, but tried hearts and steady heads that will give no handle to the malignancy of our enemies. Once more firmly footed in Cyprus, it will not be difficult to repurchase the sovereignty of that island from the weak, beggared monarch who now holds it, or even to buy his very claims upon Jerusalem, which, mere shadows in his hands, might, backed by our valour, our numbers, and our wealth, become powerful instruments in ours. Once more possessed of Cyprus, we might soon again wave the beauseant on the walls where Godfrey of Bouillon first planted the cross! Ah, my brethren, look to the East for crowns and glory-in the West our sun must set!"

Peter of Boulogne having given utterance to his political aspirations, and poured out the cares that had cankered his breast ever since Molay's return to France, resumed his seat, and the commander of Cyprus, an

aged man, worn with Eastern conflict, rose in his turn.

"Yes," said the old warrior, in feeble tones, but with as much energy as his nature was capable of—"yes, my brethren, our proctor has wisely spoken. It was but as yesterday that our reverend grand master, the chief dignitaries of our Order, and its treasures, were all safely sheltered within my poor preceptory of Limisso—our archives are still there. The horses that brought you all hither are in these stables; our galleys are yet in the port of Marseilles, let them bear you back again. The Pope would see—he has seen you; our reverend brother's advice is good—Cyprus might be ours, let us back to it. I cannot, ignorant layman that I am, express myself like my clerical and learned brother; but as my war-horse has sniffed the lion afar off in the desert when I could not hear its roar, and snorted at the approaching simoom which I guessed not, so now do I feel the coming danger, though I know not whence it threatens. Back to Cyprus, my brethren, and let it be our Rhodes!"

Jean de Tour, an aged man, who united in his person the double dignities of treasurer of the Temple and grand almoner of France, next spoke, chiefly urging the propriety of sending the treasures back to Limisso with as little delay and as much secrecy as might be; but when asked his motives for pressing this point, the old man seemed distressed, and gazed, wistfully, at Peter of Boulogne, undoubtedly the most farsighted member of the Temple. Pruino Raynal, eminent among the clergy, and all the clerks and priests there present, sided with these their especial leaders, but without being more explicit, raising thus a vein of opposition in the knights. For though the Order was based on hierarchy as well as chivalry, the spirit of the latter system triumphed over that of the former. The clericals generally, it is true, came not of houses inferior to those of the knights; still their footing in the Temple was not

exactly the same, and they were oftener obliged to yield to the crude, ill-digested, impetuous opinions of the latter than was consistent with the welfare of the community. To Peter of Boulogne's remark, that Clement V. could not wholly be trusted, seeing that he was not so alive to the interests of the Church as he might be, and, consequently, not so friendly to the Temple as Eugenius, Innocent, and even in later times, Bonifacius, had proved themselves, Noffodei, the Italian, replied with bluntness of manner which contrasted strangely and suspiciously with a sly, searching eye and crafty smile, that Clement was too busy with his own affairs at Avignon to think of either Church or State; and, therefore, if no steady friend, he was an easy ally.

"Clement," exclaimed impetuously Gerard de Villars, "is born vassal to King Philip—the slave of his will! If Philip were not our friend to-morrow, Clement were our declared foe in the face of all the bulls

of his predecessors."

"What matters it who is our friend and who our foe!" cried the indomitable prior of Montfaucon—"we are formidable enough to be dreaded and too formidable to dread in turn. He is but a false heart and no

true Templar who fears any power on earth!"

Now, for the first time, the awed youngsters found courage to speak; for it was the rule of all chapters that every brother present should have a voice in the council, plurality of voices carrying all points; it was only by a prudent selection of members that the grand master could guide matters into any desired channel. Loud were the voices of the three brothers de Bures, Hughes de Fravaux, and Almeric d'Aulnoy, in backing Flexian's opinion; the juvenile intrepidity of their natures warming up their thoughts and inspiring them with a rude eloquence which found an echo in the breasts of the elder warriors. Even D'Auvergne and the grand master themselves were infected by the ardour of their youthful colleagues, and Peter of Boulogne and Pruino Raynal exchanged glances

of dismay.

"Yes," said Molay, rising and drawing up his majestic form to its full height, whilst the glimmer of the undying fire within lent to his features a momentary glow-" yes, if we but remain true to ourselves, faithful to our bond of unity and love, faithful to the Temple which our predecessors built so high, adding stone upon stone with patient and strong hands—if we be but such faithful masons, despite the jealousy of monk or prince, of mitred abbot or of crowned king, the noble building shall extend and enlarge, and every pillar be one of glory. Unity of purpose and brotherly love-this must be our motto: every separate interest, every petty passion must be discarded at once, and for ever. I know," continued the grand master, with increasing energy, his sunken eye seeming to plunge into the vague obscurity beyond the table, as though, to the aged seer, it were peopled with dim forms invisible to grosser senses, and his whole countenance becoming lighted up by an expression of wild enthusiasm-"yes, I know it-I see it. The mighty of this world fear and hate us -they have ever lain in our path and baffled us. Arragon was ours-a king wrenched it from us! Palestine had been ours but for the feeble kings that lost it! Cyprus was ours, we were forced to yield it to a Everywhere they have stood between us and the sun. Even now, Philip himself, for whom, more than once, we have sacrificed dearer

duties—who sought and found relief at our hands whenever he needed it; to whom our coffers were open, whom our walls, our persons shielded in the hour of danger—even he suspects, mistrusts, and hates us! Who could believe such ingratitude possible? How henceforth shall we fathom the hearts of princes? But they may hate—they may waylay us as the lion waylays man's path in the desert, what care we? I know ye," he continued, clenching his hand at the impalpable objects his passion-fraught glance seemed to fix in space—"I know ye, and, kings, I defy ye!" Overcome by this unwonted burst of passion, the old man sank back exhausted in his seat.

At a given signal from D'Auvergne, the seneschal closed the chapter with the customary invitation to join in humble prayer. Most hearts there glowed with renewed fire. But alas! Jacques Molay's closing address had undone all that his opening speech had effected. Of all that had been spoken that night, nought was remembered but the certainty of being more than equal to all foes, and exalted above all perils. The elder knights discarded the views of Peter of Boulogne as idle visions inspired by idler terrors; and the younger, indulging more than ever the sin that made the angels fall, withdrew from the council-chamber with an almost giddy consciousness of power.

Daylight struggled through the windows of the long gallery as the knights hastened along it; and soon the clattering of horses' hoofs was heard in the court-yard, as many of the brothers, mounting steeds held in readiness for them, hastened off to their different preceptories to

report that night's proceedings.

INVASION OR NO INVASION?

That is the rub!—SHAKSPEARE.

I AM sure, mon cher Prince, you will have long since forgotten ME. Circumstances have moulded our position so widely apart. You are Emperor of a great nation, I the publisher's hack, but for "auld lang syne" I must write to you a few words in remembrance of the pint of sherry we have nibbled our biscuits over as we each sat at our little tables in the Wragenphamish Club; for the Lopez cigar you honoured me by accepting on the steps; for the nod you were kind enough to give me in Leicester-square; and the dead cut in Rotten-row. I tell you frankly I admire your restless character. I like your speeches—they read well; and I like your decision in council, and your manner in society, and your virtue in marrying a respectable woman instead of a poverty-stricken princess of some little principality, and who has nothing to offer but her title, and a jar or so of sour krout, or a dowry which a cotton-spinner would sneer at for a year's income. I like you for all this, mon Prince, and therefore, when they say you are coming to invade us, I, in remembrance of the nod in Leicester-square, cry aloud, "I don't believe them." You won't, will you now, mon Prince? You won't, surely, keep your honeymoon in blood and carnage, in desolating homes, and blowing down

houses in London, and killing children, and ravishing wives? I am sure you will not. You will go to some château in the country, and be as loving and as dove-ing to madame, as ever the Honourable Tom Noddle was to his Matilda up the Rhine, or Jack Smith to his Mary at Graves-end. Now, mon Prince, promise me all this, and I will always shout,

"Io, Pæan, our Emperor is great!"

I know it—you need not tell me—the press has behaved very badly to you; but don't mind them. Punch is too hard on you—ostracise him; the Times—why he is too great a leviathan to tackle with—leave him alone. Treat him with Christian charity; give him the other cheek to slap, and when he sees you great and prosperous, which you will be, he will be sorry for it, mon Prince, and must apologise then, and, mindful of his former injustice, he will cry louder than ever, "Io, Pæan, our Prince

is great!"

Well, I know that letter the other day was very annoying—written by a Frenchman, too; but, mon Prince, if your breakfast depends on your pen, which with us poor devils it does, and whether we write well or ill decides whether we have tea and chops at the coffee-house, or a cup of chicory at the tin can round the corner of the street, it is wonderful how it sharpens up our intellects. It, perhaps, was never written by a Frenchman at all, but by a poor starving creature, in a garret at the top of the house, with a consumptive wife, a squalling baby, and an amorous cat, all which would stir up his venom sadly. Myself I could write you a much better epithalamium after a champagne supper, or one of your Tuileries' balls, than I could in my den in town at the contract price of so much a line. They call you a butcher! Bear with them a little-all great men are the subject of jealousy—and work out your empire's ends. You know they live in glass houses too; they have slain Kaffirs, and Affghans, and Chinese in numbers, and though they have curious names, and still more curious complexions, yet, mon Prince, they are not rats and mice, but have eternal souls like you or I. Ah! I see you smile as you were wont to smile; and you remember how the Dowdows used to go to that Hall in the Strand to gabble about the little black sinners of Timbuctoo, Caribbee, and Callahpoewah, and forgot all about the swarms of still blacker sinners (in heart and morals) who swarm about St. Giles's, Rotherhithe, Shoreditch, and Dudley-street. Eh! why you laugh now. It is annoying, very, I will allow; for never does a herring-smack of yours come cruising off our coast, but it is set down immediately as a vessel reconnoitring; never does one of the matelots (to use a very vulgar phrase) "cock Snooks," but as certain as fate the newspapers have it next day that it is one of your engineers surveying our island for invasion, while all this time you are devising a new gâteau for your balls, or a new Yes, that foolish bet-it has quite clinched mantilla for your bride. matters now. Well, well, well. Now, you must not be angry, mon Prince; you must smile, and hear me out. The English must bet, and our "great calculator" and "peace agitator" has not studied the odds sufficiently at those two well-known hotels, the Bank and the Commercial, in Manchester, to allow him yet awhile to make "his book." He offered odds, my dear Prince, that would have been taken up as often as ever he holloaed them out in any ring in the kingdom. By-the-by, I think you did not have the "good thing" I put you on in 1844, to back Runming Rein for the Derby, did you? or doubtless you would have been well "up" in these matters, and have had some of the names of the noble fraternity of gentlemen-betters down in your "metallic book." If Mr. Cobden takes to betting in this rash manner down at Tattersall's, I assure you, Prince, you will have him at Boulogne, if not at Paris, before the year is out; Rothschild's estate could not bear it; while, perhaps, the lieutenant-general is only backing his opinion from some babillage he has heard at Tours——. There is a great deal written just now from all sides. A gentleman—our old friend Pater familias, perhaps (you remember how shocked he used to be at the guardsmen winking at the nursery-maids by the Serpentine, and the very bold-looking young lady he found with "her keind fre—e—nd," as she drawled it out, down at Richmond, when he took his daughter there for a treat)—has written to the Times to say something in Rome, or rather

Somebody had told that somebody said That somebody else had somewhere read

that the officers of your army had already taken beds at Mivart's, ordered dinners in the United Service and Army and Navy Clubs—and "flown kites" on the Bank of England. Well, since that, I know for a fact one of your rédacteurs was listening at the door of one of our officer's mess-rooms. I am not quite sure whether he was disguised as an old clothesman, or a vendor of prime havannahs; he heard this—the officers were discussing you, mon Prince, but they made Belgium the theatre of your attack. Of course they all settled that England would have a finger in the pie, and an army sent over.

"And we shall bivouac once more in jolly Paris—what a lark!" said one. "When we do," said another, a pale-faced, contemplative youth, "my spolia shall be those two beautiful pictures in the Louvre by Murillo, one the Assumption of the Virgin, and the other, on the right hand side as you walk down, the Meeting of Mary and Elizabeth."

Your rédacteur, mon Prince, would have given you this in the Moniteur on his return, but you have stopped the press and the liberty of speech, so instead, he gave the following canard—half-believed by most of your subjects, and which gave great satisfaction to your police: "Mr. John Bull Owl had a fight with Mr. Radical (he translates radical by the word Rave; no consequence, however) Turkey. Both messieurs reside in Tottenham-court-road—the Champs de Mars of London. The cause of the quarrel arose about the former's wife, whom the latter had sold with a halter round her neck at a public ball at Almack's (Almanack, as he translates it), presided over by Milady L—nd—y, wife of Le Marquis who liberated Abd-el-Kader."

Mon cher Prince, your destiny once led you to do a very foolish thing. It made you take a mansion in Kent—settle plans—turn all your property into ready money, and go over to take France. For this you were confined in Ham, from whence you made your escape to come back a very poor man, eat your chop at the Wragenphamish Club, and ride a rhubarb bay horse in Rotten-row, that would have been all the better for a little more corn and grooming.

Now, where is your destiny going to land you, mon Prince? On those perfidious white cliffs, whose nation fight like bull-dogs, growl like mastiffs, never once talk of "Glory," but, sacré!—you must not swear, my

Prince-only that sober Saxon, matter-of-fact, ever conquering word,

" DOOTY."

Well, well, well. I know you have read Macaulay, our great historian, and you propose landing at Dartmouth or Torbay. You will find it a very long, dirty, boggy march up to London. Your men won't like it; they will find it different to the light roads of your own country, and your guns will stick in the mud. You cannot land anywhere else, you know. By-the-by, mon cher Prince, did you ever see troops embark or disembark? If you have not, send some of your generals down to Liverpool in the spring, and let them see how it is done; and they will find, with the assistance of the police, and under cover of a friendly mob, it takes three hours to ship fifty rank and file, and the same time to disembark them on the quays in Dublin, and when they are got out you would hardly credit how knocked up the horses are for the first day's march.

Your uncle was a great general, certes, and he made great generals, mon Prince. There was Ney, and Junot, and Murat, and many others. But who made them, pray? Why that little piece of wonderful humanity called by the ranks "The little Corporal." He made all of them himself, I do assure you, mon Prince. A war can only be carried on by one head, and that must be a master-head. Do you, mon cher Prince, consider yourself as good in strategy as you are in diplomacy? for they are very different trades. While I think, if I was a judge of such matters, you have banished your best generals from France. Have you not? They may be cantankerous, mutinous fellows in peace, but I am almost inclined to believe they would be the "flower of your army" in war, do you

know.

We have a good and an efficient army just now at home, and generals who have seen some service. We have never been at peace for the last twenty years, what with Canada, and India, and China, and the Cape, which have managed to keep our fellows' "hands in," mon cher. I think you have only had your barricade work, and smoking those Africans in their holes. Have you? But I assure you there is no jealousy on our army's part-none whatever. They would fight with you to-morrow, and sup with you after. But, I will tell you, our navy hates you as Jack Tar only knows how to hate; and if ever you do effect a landing, and if ever you do retreat, my word for it, "Jack" will not allow one single soul of you ever to reach your native shores again. But you won't retreat, of course. England has only at present one hundred and one thousand nine hundred and thirty-seven men as a standing army, and many-nay, the greater part-are serving abroad in her other territorial possessions. Well, mon Prince, I will allow that. Eh? eh? you want the numbers employed in our colonies, do you? Well, you shall have that too-thirty-nine thousand nine hundred and seventy-one, leaving sixty-one thousand nine hundred and sixty-six brave souls to defend us at home. But, mon Prince, we have a strong body of police, well trained and organised; we have a strong force of militia and yeomanry; but, more than all that, we have one of the finest reserves in the world in our enrolled pensioners-men who have fought and conquered, mon Prince, for their country. Then there are the Chartists. Well, but you carried your baton on the 10th of April, 1848, when a few poor fanatics "kicked up a dust," and they won't forgive you for

that, though I and every right-thinking man was then proud of you, mon Prince. Then there is Ireland. I would not depend too much on her. There was a little electioneering affair at a little town in the far west, called Six-mile Bridge, that has shaken my belief of the power of priests over British soldiers; for there, on the command to fire, Irish Romanist soldiers fired immediately on a mob of Papists, though these priests were Besides, mon cher, half the kingdom is as bigoted in Protestantism as the other half is in Roman Catholicism; and if you had won Ireland, I think you would be soon tired of it. More opposite in her ways, means, and characterism are these people to your subjects than the squaws of Esquimaux to the fair beauties of Cashmere. would not understand their rows, their whisky-drinking, and their "nate handling of the bit of a switch," when, in a playful mode, they fracture their best friend's skull. Your gallants and roues would be mightily surprised, when dancing with the Norahs and Kathleens, to find Father Tam, the priest, arrive with a long hunting-whip, and lay right heartily into the backs of both of them, the Irish girls and their admirers, screaming and telling them "to get out of that, the big thundering blackguards;" and penance to do, and purgatory to be threatened with, and the other hundred-and-one punishments which your clergy can invoke on

their apostate flock.

No! mon Prince! England would suit you very well, but you must not have that just yet. You must be content, mon cher; you have a fine kingdom of great internal resources, but you had better improve it. Your passports are bad, your police are bad, your octroi is bad, your fires are bad, your beefsteaks are bad, and your customs are bad; but, mon ami, you have things far worse. Your religion, when you have your shops open after mass; and your morality, when you dance the polka, go to theatres, and drink lemonade, and see fountains play-you know where—on the Sabbath-day; and your want of cleanliness, and no soap in your hotels. You cannot have England just yet. I know we are a cozy, comfortable lot of people; we are lethargic; we have no swagger, and talk, and holloaing of "Vivat" this or that. No! no! no! you would not suit us either at all, so you must be satisfied with what you have got, and remain so, mon Prince, otherwise there are democrats yet in your empire who will take advantage of your absence. There is our ancient ally (Heaven forfend the mark!) Austria, and there is Russia, whom your uncle attacked on the one side, and Spain and Portugal, whom he scourged with the fire and the sword on the other, and where, I assure you, the Orleans blood is far from extinct. These might take advantage of your venture-" destiny," by-the-by, you call it-and thus not only may your brave fanatics have their bones whitened by our east winds, and again the polish dulled by the fogs, and you yourself (for of course it will be no invasion except you, mon Prince, lead the forlorn hope), being taken prisoner, are lodged in York or Chester Castles, and Nicholas divide France, and give a square end to Joinville, whose fate and pamphlet might act as a good warning to you to be loving to Eugénie, but not foolhardy to England; and so, with hopes of every success in your matrimonial career, and peace to all mankind, I am, sire, a humble, devoted admirer of L. and E. N.

SKETCHES OF VENICE.

HAVE you ever, while hanging over one of Canaletti's pictures, gazed into the blue of their soft Italian skies, or seemed to look down into the limpid transparency of their waters, without a longing desire to throw yourself amidst such scenes, to imbibe that rarified atmosphere, and plunge within the mirrored and tremulous element? Have you not been conscious of a wish to find yourself seated in one of those mysterious and inviting-looking gondolas, floating out far from the habitations of men, with but the nearness of the one loved-the ripple sounding with its ever-living voice of song, and around, above, beneath you, the still calmness of perfect love and pleasure? Look again into the scenes that he has conjured up. Do you not see Venice rising like a bride from the ocean, and cannot you realise that passion of her people's love who tell you to behold her "e piu morire?" Shall we glance upon her women? We must not look for them in the streets of Venice, where the sun glares in upon the closed venetians; where the lazaretti lay stretched in dead sleep upon the burning flags, and interest and servility have set a common brand upon the populace. No! far off in the wild campaign, amidst the vineyards and the mountains, where the spirit of man is yet unfettered, there go forth and behold Beauty as she is, sunning your soul in the power and might of her loveliness. Yes! truly a majestic womanhood—what bearing—noble, graceful, dignified; what Juno-like forms; what classic features—no covering on the head, save Nature's best ornament, her gift of hair; and how bounteous she has been in this respect—how beautifully it is arranged—large broad plaits (one of which would shame our English women) twisted into coronets, formed into fancy baskets-always beautiful-always in perfect taste, each with the step and bearing of a queen; and yet these women answer to our labourers' wives—to the daughters and mothers of our workers of Beautiful Italy! we come back to you again ever with pleasure. Our soul languishes with delight beneath your glowing skiesyour classic memories - your ruined temples - your painting, your sculpture, and your poetry. It is an enchanted life that we lead beneath you -a kind of passion dream-glowing fervid-not pouring itself out, as elsewhere, in satiety and exhaustion, but a slumberous existence, a life of the senses, imbibing all of the bright, rich, and beautiful, and forming from them a new creation in which the soul delights ever to dwell.

It is the day's decline, and, leaning from a window of one of the old palace homes of Venice, looking down into the clear transparency of her waters, and seeing reflected therein her own loveliness, with a troubled shade it is true on her countenance, and thoughts, oh, how far absent, is seated a noble Roman lady. She has all the grand beauty of her race—the full throat—the small and gracefully shaped head—the exquisite bust—the large, glorious, shadowy eyes, tremulous as stars, full of soul and poetry—the clouds of dark hair pushed back from the forehead, and secured behind by having a silver arrow run through them; no other ornament—herself a gem, priceless, unapproachable. Truly so; for as you gaze upon her you see the eye brighten and dilate wildly, mournfully, whilst she sways herself to and fro with a restless motion, as though to still the beatings of her heart, singing all the time a kind of low crooning lullaby to the ripple of the waves. In the afternoons, when the little bay is alive with pleasure-crafts, and gondolas come up under her

very windows, taking in their freight of happy passengers, her figure may still be seen ever singing that same monotonous chant; ever pressing her hands against her bosom, and bending over them, as though

she thus soothed some unconscious infant to its sweet repose.

Such are the mournful phases of her disordered intellect. Her story is soon told. Young, lovely, loving, and beloved, with one beautiful boy to bless their union, life was fast becoming to Lucrezia B. an earthly paradise. She had been bidden with her husband to a grand state ball; and as she swept past them, with the brilliants hanging like tears in her dark hair, and the folds of her white dress flowing round her in classic drapery, even those most accustomed to her appearance felt upon them "the power and might of loveliness." She stooped to kiss her infant son, slumbering in his cot like a fair bud of promise, and having exacted of the nurse that she should not leave the side of the timid child until her return, passed onwards with the calm smile and

placid manner that is ever the best assurance of a heart at ease.

Shall we follow her into the marble halls, where through the pillars may be seen sweet fountains, throwing up their crystal jets of water, and dashing bright trembling tear-drops on the living flowers that repose beneath them, laden with perfume, glorious in colouring, peeping out from their green sanctuary of shade like stars of earth, glimmering, tremulous? Shall we listen with her to the invisible music that seems to rise as beneath our feet with wild prelude-passionate, appealingtill, swelling in sound, it bursts in gladness and revelry into a kind of choral triumph, in which voices are blended, and from which is struck out, like ringing bells, the valzes' musical melody. How rapidly the dancers fly forwards in the mazy circle, threading intricate figures; how beautifully is combined the music of motion with the poetry of sound! The evening speeds swiftly forward. The Prince de B. has solicited the hand of our heroine, and through the graceful valze her figure is again seen floating, brilliant as Houri, light as spray of Ocean. Suddenly a shriek rings piercing from her lips-wild, fearful she stops; she shudders; she trembles convulsively; she grasps the arm of her companion desperately, as though to steady herself, and sobs, from her white, half-opened lips, "My child! oh, God, my Carlino!" Her eyes are fixed; there is in them an expression of nameless horror, of unfathomable dread; her teeth are chattering as with ague. They bear her through the pillars, dashing the cold water from the fountain on her pale brow, but it is still the same bewildered look of agony. "Take me home!—oh! quickly—my child! do you not see he is dying?" and a cold shivering tremor again seizes her—the carriage is brought round -reverently is she placed in it, for the presence of a great grief will sober even the giddiest—the horses' feet strike the flints—they draw up under the palazzo—the door stands open—her husband raises her in his arms like a child, and carries her up the broad stair-way-she presses her hands upon her ears, for the wild shrieks of a little child come ringing through the halls, and even the father's strong frame totters and shakes beneath them. They enter their boy's nursery; it is crowded with hirelings; and on a low stool is seated the nurse, holding the child in her arms, just as she has taken him out of his cot. He is screaming in violent convulsions; his face black; his eyes turned upwards to the face of a mask that is suspended over the cot curtains. Painfully, as though in a dream, the unfortunate mother staggers forwards, grasping

him in her arms just as a fresh convulsion seizes on his weakened frame, and the soul dissolves away in its mortal fear and agony. Yes—the story spoke for itself—the faithless nurse had seized the opportunity of the mother's absence to spend her evening abroad; and knowing the child to be timid, had thought to guard against danger by leaving the lamp burning in the room, and suspending a mask over the cot, that he might have that to turn to and play with should he awake, and find himself alone.

We know the conclusion. Heaven help the poor child who, stretching out his arms to receive the usual caresses, was met only by that grim spectre mask face bending over him as though it were coming down to overwhelm him, and would not be denied its prey. We can only image the terror that little soul passed through, and give a sigh to the miserable mother who, ever since that miserable day, has kept her bewildered watch at his nursery window—now, in her wild passion of delirium, clasping him in fancy to her bosom; now, with low voice and raised finger, singing snatches of childish lullaby, or crooning out weak accompaniment

to the half sob of the surging ripple.

Beautiful Venice! Many indeed are the scenes that are enacted within you, sitting proudly as you do, Queen of the Adriatic, looking down upon the waters spread out at your feet like passive slaves. Even now upon their surface glide the gondolas, coming, going, returning; within them young, beating, trembling hearts; without, the dull surface of a listless composure. Do you see that one that is nearing us? contains the Marchesa de ---. How slowly and peacefully it moves along the waters! And yet there is one with her too fatally dear, in whose presence hours pass like minutes, and time itself seems but a river to the eternity of their love! For all that, already on the landing-place stands one to confront them—pale, sallow, pitiless. There is an air of determined ferocity, of brutal triumph, even now upon his countenance. It is her husband, the Marchese de ——. He beckons to the boatman to approach—he has his eye on the awning—he longs to tear off those thick curtains—to gloat in his satisfied revenge over the certainty of his suspicions. The shore behind him is lined with loiterers, all watching, all anxious; for this intrigue of the marchesa's is well known, and there is something in the demon aspect of the marchese that calls forth a sentiment of compassion towards his young and beautiful wife. Nearer and nearer—there is no movement from the awning—no tremulous consciousness of discovered guilt. Their danger has been communicated to them by a sign from the boatman, yet still no fear, no trembling; only she presses nearer to him, as though she there finds her best security, whilst the grasp of his hand on hers grows ever firmer and more nervous. They near the shore—the brow of the gondola is touching on the landing-place, when, just as the marchese puts his foot upon it, the boatman reverses the oars, and in another moment the unfortunate husband is struggling in the water. He stretches out an oar to him, but contrives at the same time to prevent his seeing anything, whilst the Englishman, bounding from the gondola to the shore, makes hasty retreat, and is lost to sight, just as the half-drowned, furious marchese is dragged spluttering and swearing on board by the boatman, who overwhelms him with his regrets for the untoward accident, whilst the marchesa, pale, dignified, and seated solitary in unconscious-looking innocence, receives him with calm serenity and unruffled composure.

MADELINE VERNON.

I.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possest.
Oh, Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle—your home—and your bier?

SHELLEY.

I MUST commence my tale by informing my readers that I am one of an unjustly despised class—I am an old maid. I hope that such a confession may not lead them to throw aside the book. I am not going to tell my own tale. Like most other old maids, my heart has a tale, but my present business is not with myself, and I will only here say a few words of myself. Lest any bitterness of language in which I may indulge should be misconstrued, I will only say that the sorrow which turned the bright summer of my life into one long, desolate winter, came not from the falseness of man, but from the hand of God. Death came between me and the idol of my youth, and from that time I have dwelt alone in spirit. But I have had feelings and sympathies excited, as life passed on, for my younger friends, and I fancy that I may do some good by writing down the story of one life that deeply interested me a few years ago.

It was on a sultry day in the month of August, five years ago, that I arrived at Arden Park, to pay a long-promised visit to my friends and connexions, Mr. and Mrs. Trevelyan. I found their hospitable house filled with visitors, some of whom I had often met before, and some were strangers to me. I do not intend to prolong this story by dwelling on any persons or incidents that have no connexion with my main object. I shall, therefore, not stay to describe either the place or the visitors whom I found there, but pass at once to a description of the two persons of

whom I wish to speak.

When our party assembled in the drawing-room before dinner, Mrs. Trevelyan came up to me, bringing with her a young lady whom I had never seen before, and whom she introduced to me as the daughter of a very old and valued friend of mine, a clergyman, whom I had not met for many years, but with whom I had kept up a friendly correspondence, in the hope of our being thrown together again at some time by the

ever-shifting scenes of life.

Madeline Vernon was about two-and-twenty. I shall not describe her appearance, because she was not handsome, and I know that a heroine without beauty will hardly interest my readers. It is somewhat difficult to say why she interested me as much as she did from the first evening that we met. When I consider her manner, and appearance, and qualities, at this distance of time and events, I should feel puzzled to mention anything to you that could account for my feeling interested in her at once.

She was not accomplished—she neither played nor sang; she was not exactly pleasing in her manners—she was rather cold and distant; she was not clever, and hardly entered into general conversation at all; sometimes she seemed shy even to gaucherie; at other times she seemed perfectly indifferent to the presence of those around her. No one who really knew her could have accused her of affectation or caprice, and yet the variations of her mood and manner might induce superficial observers to pronounce her capricious. She was quiet and ladylike in her demeanour; and although, as I before said, she was not at all handsome, her eyes were dark and expressive, and I liked to look into them. I wish that no glance more dangerous than mine had ever looked into them.

Madeline was seated beside me on a sofa, answering my many questions about her home and parents, when the door opened, and a gentleman entered whom I had so often met at Arden Park and elsewhere that we had become quite intimate with one another, and I believe he was always well pleased to meet "Aunt Mary," as I was almost universally called.

And here again I am perplexed about a personal description, for no one could have called Charles Percival good looking; and if I were to describe his outward appearance as it really was, how should I make my readers believe in the extraordinary fascination he exercised on every one whom he wished to fascinate? His figure was very good; slight and active; and there was a native refinement and grace in every word and movement that attracted one's favourable attention to him till you forgot to notice whether he were handsome or not. He had rich curling brown hair, and it fell on a high and well-formed forehead. His hand was beautifully formed, and delicate as a woman's. I cannot tell in what his great charm lay. I knew him well, and, though an old woman, I was fascinated like every one else; but I cannot tell what fascinated me. He was the most dangerous man I ever saw in his intercourse with women. He did not flirt—no one could possibly have applied that common-place word to his manners-but quietly, and apparently involuntarily, he gained an influence which was afterwards utterly valueless to himself, and which might too probably prove a fatal influence to another.

Do not think that I am drawing one of those common and hateful characters who deliberately endeavour to gain a girl's affections, and when her peace of mind is gone, cast from them as worthless the heart which it was a pleasant and exciting pastime to try and win. Charles Percival had a tender and affectionate heart; he would not willingly have given pain to any breathing thing, but it was his nature—his in-born nature—to endeavour to make himself an object of interest to almost every woman he approached. He could not have helped it unless he had remodelled himself entirely. It seemed so irresistible to him to try and establish something of a peculiar mutual interest between himself and every woman whose society pleased him, that he apparently overlooked the fact that whilst he thus indulged his imagination without incurring any risk of troubling his heart, others might not so easily be able to draw the line, and stop, like himself, exactly at the safe stage of interest

and feeling.

I am not drawing a perfect character—far from it; and I will add here that I think there was a good deal of vanity in his character. There is in almost every man. He would have scorned trying deliberately to gain the affections of any girl whom he did not love, but he was pleased and excited when he detected traces of the influence he had gained over any woman's feelings and imagination; and he saw very quickly when this was the case, and would thereby be tempted to closer intimacy for a time, unheeding, or absolutely never considering that he might thus inflict incurable sorrow on another. He would speak as if he meant more than met the ear, and for the moment he probably felt it; he would look as if he read and responded to the language of eyes that dared hardly meet his own, and for the moment he probably did so; but he knew that the feeling was transient. His manners were unfailingly respectful and courteous to every woman, but he would manage to make each one feel in turn as if she in some way peculiarly interested him—as if she in some way might influence him to good, as no other could: and nothing en-

chains a woman more surely than this.

I do not know that he was unusually clever. I rather think not. But he had more tact to make the best of himself than any man I ever He might not read deeply, but he talked admirably, and no subject could be broached, whether light or solid, in which he would not bear his share in the conversation better than any one else, although very possibly on some subjects there might be others present much better informed than he was. Something indescribable about his tone and manner would dignify a frivolous subject—would refine a coarse subject would lighten a tedious subject-and invest with interest the most common-place subject. If he chose to argue (as he often did) quite on the wrong side of a question, you might feel irritated at yourself for being unable to try and silence him at once with the words that would have come to you so readily in argument with any one else; but you felt instinctively that he would meet you on all sides, and silence you even when possibly both you and he knew that you were on the right He seemed to stand on a pedestal that no one might attempt to throw down; although one knew it to have weak parts, one never could discover on which side they were; and it required considerable courage to encounter the glancing of his retorts if he fancied that any one presumed to enter the lists on imaginary equal terms with him.

He never hesitated in conversation—never seemed put out; he talked easily and naturally to every one; he would pass from subject to subject lightly and gracefully; at home on all subjects. He could converse well with others, and if surrounded by those who could not converse, from stupidity or any other reason, he had a marvellous power of carrying on the flow of conversation by himself, without its being done so as to lead any one to think him too talkative. He had great confidence in his own powers, and there is no doubt that self-confidence (if gracefully kept out of sight, as it was in his case) is the best characteristic for helping a man to show to the world the best of what is in him; because it enables a man to talk naturally, and whatever is done naturally will please.

I have gone into a long dissertation upon Charles Percival, but I greatly doubt my leaving anything like his real character or manner before the reader's mind. The substance of my tale blames him. I blame all men who thoughtlessly trifle with a woman's feelings; but I

would prevent your thinking too ill of one whom I love in spite of his failings, and I would prejudice you at first in his favour, though I would offer this tale as a warning to those who act as he did. His faults were the faults of his nature, but he might have struggled against it, instead of yielding as he did; and I think that his position in life, and the way he had been brought up, had tended to foster what was objectionable in him. His parents were dead, and he had been left at an early age, with a fine property and handsome fortune, under the nominal care of easy guardians, who had allowed him an unlimited income, and permission to travel and amuse himself as he best chose. He had travelled accordingly, and been spoilt and made much of wherever he went. In this mode of life, much of what is most evil in society had presented itself to him, and unfortunately, vice was not hateful in his sight, if only it were disguised by the refinement which his native taste made imperatively necessary to him before any pleasure could tempt him within its influence.

To return to Arden Park. I observed during the first evening of my stay there that Charles Percival bestowed more attention upon Madeline Vernon than upon any of the other, and more outwardly attractive, young ladies who were there. I have said before that he did not flirt. He did not follow, or seem to seek out Madeline, but quietly, and apparently without intention, he seemed to find himself wherever her place was; and although I believe their conversation was common-place enough—of books, and scenery, and such immaterial topics—I marked the heightened colour and bright eye with which Madeline listened to him, so unlike her indifferent manner when any other addressed her; I saw the earnest and half-confidential manner with which he spoke to her, and I, knowing him well, wished that he had chosen for the passing hour some girl more experienced in the world's ways; for Madeline seemed to me so quiet and retiring in her manners, and I knew that she had seen little or nothing

of society.

There is nothing in the way of incident to make my story interesting, and I must not make this portion of it too long. I stayed one month at Arden Park, and during that month my chief object of interest was the intimacy that I saw daily increasing between these two young people. I never for a moment thought that Charles really loved Madeline; and yet if I had not known him well, and watched him at other times, I should never have doubted that he did. But I marked the change that passed over Madeline's calm face as he entered the room; it was no more than the ripple which the summer breeze raises on the lake, but I knew that the deep waters lay below. I saw-because I watched narrowly—the deep interest with which Madeline listened when he read aloud to us; and whatever the volume might be from which he read, I felt sure of finding it in Madeline's hands afterwards, and I felt equally sure that the words were in Madeline's heart. He read poetry well, and he recited it beautifully; his memory was stored with poetry, and here, I believe, lay one of his arts of fascinating. I have heard him repeat impassioned poetry, and I have seen, whilst he did so, how his eyes would seek Madeline's for one moment, and whilst hers sunk beneath his glance, and I could fancy I saw the beating of her heart, his glance turned indifferently away, and his heart beat regularly on.

And yet I reiterate that he did not deliberately and heartlessly wrong her. He felt gratified and excited by the symptoms of interest that she unconsciously evinced for him; he had taken unjustifiable pains to draw them forth, and success was pleasant. Her cold and indifferent manner had originally tempted him to seek her society, and endeavour to break through a barrier that should still exist for others. He now liked her society; he liked herself; but he never dreamed of loving her when this pleasant summer-month was over. Why did he not pause to consider whether she understood this?

There was a mocking vein in his character too, which was very seldom exhibited, but when it was, he was merciless. Sometimes, if he were not in the mood for his usual half-tender, half-intimate conversation with Madeline, I have heard him speak satirically and scornfully of the very things which at another moment were his favourite and engrossing topics. I have seen her at such times raise her eyes inquiringly to his, and a strange look of disquiet would pass over her features as she met his smile and heard his words, so unlike himself. Sometimes he would even address herself in a tone of idle, mocking compliment, seeming to jest upon the more heartfelt intercourse they generally held together. This always seemed to pain and surprise her greatly; and at such times she endeavoured to avoid his presence and conversation, either taking up a book, or leaving the room.

He could make himself more disagreeable than any other man I ever met. If any one were present whom he happened to dislike, or in his own superiority of intellect to despise, how ruthlessly would he draw out all the weaker parts of that man's character!—how mercilessly would he expose to ridicule what he thought ridiculous in him!—how overbearing he could be, though always with a native courtesy that made it impossible for his weaker antagonist to quarrel with him!—how contemptuously polite his tone became; nothing on the surface to enable one to retort, yet everything in reality to rouse to fever-heat the indignant feelings of any one who might happen to feel interested in the victim he had selected. This conduct he would repent the next day, but to repeat the

same the first time temptation came in his way.

During that month's stay at Arden Park I had become much attached to Madeline. I did not quite understand her character and manners; I did not know then what I have learned since, that a change was passing over both at that very time; but I loved her, and as the time drew near for her return home, I gladly accepted an invitation from her parents to

accompany her, and visit them at The Rectory.

It was two long days' journey from Arden Park to Madeline's home, and we were well pleased to travel together. I watched her closely during the last day of our stay at Arden Park. I dreaded lest I should see any anxiety or disquiet at parting from one whom I felt certain had excited unusual interest in her heart; but she seemed calm as usual; and when I saw him hand her into the carriage on the following morning, and heard her exchange adieux with him as composedly as I did myself, and noticed that she heard some parting whisper without even a blush, I almost began to hope that Madeline might, under her quiet exterior, be more of a match for the man of the world than I had thought possible.

We had a pleasant day's journey, and stopped early in the evening at a little country inn for the night. I never shall forget that evening, or the conversation I had with Madeline in the garden of that little inn, with the bright autumn moon shining above us. She had talked rather more than usual during the day, and I had never seen a shade of sorrow or depression about her. There had been several days during the month we had spent together on which I had thought her much and strangely depressed; when it had seemed an effort for her to speak, and her eyes seemed ready to fill with tears each time she raised them. But during our journey she had been cheerful, and after tea was over she proposed going into the garden to enjoy the fine evening there, and I agreed willingly.

We were silent for some minutes, and then Madeline, turning rather

abruptly to me, put her hand on mine, and spoke.

"Aunt Mary, I wish to speak to you. Though I have known you but a short time personally, I feel that I may confide in you, and I have need of help from some friend just now. Will you listen to me?"

Her voice trembled slightly at first, but it seemed to be more from the agitation of entering on the subject with me than from anything else, for

as she continued she became perfectly calm.

The substance of her communication was this. She had become engaged about six months before this time to a clergyman whose living was in their neighbourhood, with her parents' glad consent. The marriage had only been delayed in consequence of the death of her intended husband's father, and it was now fixed to take place before Christmas. She spoke very calmly of this existing arrangement, and she told me that her parents had expressed their earnest approval of her choice; and when she came to this part of her story she paused for a few moments, and I did not interrupt her thoughts.

"Aunt Mary," she said suddenly, "the kindness I wish you to do me is this. Tell my father and mother that I wish to break this engage-

ment. Tell them that I cannot fulfil it."

"Madeline," I answered, "I hear you with equal surprise and sorrow. After six months' engagement, on what grounds can you wish to break off this marriage? Have you quarrelled with Mr. Seymour?"

"No," she replied, "I have not quarrelled with him. He is good and estimable as on the day I promised to be his wife, but I cannot fulfil

that promise. I do not love him."

"Have your feelings changed in that short time, Madeline?"

"No," she answered with energy, "my feelings have not changed; but I never understood them before. I thought I loved him. I find now I was mistaken. I esteem and respect him; I do not love him. I have not changed; I know now that I never did love him; I thought I did when I promised to be his wife."

I listened with a troubled mind to these words. I thought of Charles Percival, and I felt sure that if Madeline had never seen him, this con-

versation would never have taken place.

"Madeline," I said, passing my arm round her, "you must not give me a half-confidence, or I cannot act for you. Tell me what is the cause of this."

She trembled, and covered her face. In a few moments she looked at me, and said calmly:

"Aunt Mary, you know quite well. If I had not felt sure that you knew already, I think I could not have ventured to speak to you."

"My child," I said, "I think I do know. But, oh! beware how you throw happiness from you for a mere shadow. I must speak plainly to you, Madeline. Charles Percival does not love you."

She started from her place, and stood before me with her hands clasped

together.

"You have said his name, and I must answer what you say. I know that he does not love me. I know that he never will love me. I have never for one moment imagined that he did. I have nothing to reproach him with; I have seen clearly into his mind and character all this time. But, Aunt Mary, his image has sunk into my soul. I cannot help it; I cannot root it out. I think I must be mad to confess such a thing even to you, but it is true—and you must know it, to show you how imperative it is that my engagement should be broken off immediately. But "-and her voice sank to a whisper-"no one else must know the reason. Let them think me changeable—capricious—anything—only never, never betray me."

I tried to reason with her, to persuade her that her present state of feeling was only a momentary excitement, and that a short time would restore her to the calm happiness with which she had previously regarded

her engagement.

"Never," she said—"never! I know now what love is. I never imagined it before. I never can feel it again. Break this engagement for me, Aunt Mary, and I shall shut up my heart with the recollections of this past month.'

I spoke a few hard words of Charles, and of the heartlessness with

which he had acted. She stopped me vehemently.

"Do not blame him. I never have been so weak as to imagine he loved me. I feel," she added slowly—" I feel that it is necessary to reconcile me to myself that I should not altogether deny that his conduct is open to reproach. I feel that his conduct has been what might have broken many a girl's heart, and he been justly blamed for it; but at the same time I know that I understood him from the beginning. I was not deceived, as many others might have been, and he, who knows everything, probably knew this. I accepted the fate that is now before me with my eyes open to it. I might have gone home sooner, but I felt that the fate of my inner life was sealed, and I could not voluntarily deprive myself of one hour of that strange and mysterious feeling with which his presence inspired me."

We talked long on that evening, and by the time that we returned to the house I had agreed to all that Madeline desired. I had agreed to break her resolution to her parents, and to convey to them her earnest request that not one word might be said to her upon the subject; her

resolution was irrevocable.

After my long conversation with Madeline, I felt indeed that it would be useless to combat that resolution. There was something so calm and settled in the way she regarded her own feelings. She was no lovesick girl, sentimentally despairing, or vaguely hoping anything from the She was a woman of deep thoughts and feelings, who understood her own heart, now roused for the first time in her life, and roused the more passionately perhaps because she was past her first girlhood. Her love-if love it could be called-was totally unlike any feeling I had ever seen before. It hoped nothing, it regretted nothing. She saw his faults clearly and plainly-even his faults against herself, though she would not allow them to me at that time; but something in his inner soul had spoken to her inner soul-was it unconsciously on his part?and Madeline felt that her spirit was roused, once and for ever. She described to me that evening how strangely and almost mysteriously his words had often answered to her own unspoken thoughts-how there seemed to be an instinct in her mind, which always responded to hishow his presence seemed life to her-how his absence seemed to take all that was real and living from life. I tried to represent to her the hopeless misery of her future existence if she yielded to these feelings. She answered that she could endure quietly; she felt confident of her own powers of still endurance, but she never could shake off that influence; and she added, with the slightest tinge of bitterness in her tone:

"Why talk of *yielding* to these feelings, Aunt Mary? the feelings are stronger than myself; they rule me. His mere ideal presence rules me. I shall never again be able to have a thought entirely unconnected with him. A portion of his spirit seems to have entered my soul, and I cannot force it out. It will remain there, to rule everything else within me."

I ceased arguing with her. I felt that time only could act on such a state of mind, and I must add that I did not believe that time would change Madeline. There was something too strange and powerful in the influence that had subdued her; there was something too real and composed in the view she took of her own position.

I will only add to this first part of my tale that I complied with Madeline's wishes. The engagement was broken off, and her parents, surprised and disappointed at what they esteemed the fickleness of their child, of whose steadfast character they had formed a very different opinion, never named the subject to her. I parted from them in a few weeks, and I left Madeline apparently as calm and peaceful as when I first met her.

Charles Percival had enjoyed a month of a most pleasurable excitement; perhaps his feelings had been as much excited in their own way as Madeline's were; but now he could easily cast it all from him, and pass on to find a similar excitement elsewhere. Madeline was nothing to him, though he had felt their hearts mingle even as she did. He felt it intensely for the moment, and enjoyed it; she felt it for ever.

II.

ONE year passed away, and I found myself again journeying towards Arden Park. I had not seen Madeline Vernon during that year, but she had written frequently to me. She never had alluded in her letters to the subject of our conversation at the little country inn; and I thought

that she was right in avoiding it. Her letters were much what I should have expected from her. They were unlike the letters of a young girl. They were not exactly sad, but they were never cheerful; and I had heard with sorrow from her mother that Madeline's health was failing. She had no illness, but she was delicate, and seemed to have little

strength.

During that year Charles Percival had married. I had been much surprised to hear of his marriage. I had fancied he liked his empire over the many too well to restrict himself to one heart, and I felt interested and curious to see the woman who had become his wife. I was now going to meet them at Arden Park, and on the day that I left home I had been surprised and grieved by a letter from Madeline, mentioning that she also was to meet me there. I felt that she could not be aware of the intended visit of the Percivals, and I wished that I had had time to write and warn her; but it was too late, and I could only feel thankful that the one individual who knew Madeline's secret should be present to watch over her.

I found Madeline in my room, having arrived shortly before me. She looked wretchedly ill. I felt quite startled when she came forward to meet me. After we had exchanged greetings, I gazed at her, wishing to ask if she knew whom we were to meet, but I had no courage to mention his

name. She returned my gaze, and smiled faintly.

"I know," she said; "I came on purpose to see her. I wish to see her."

And no more passed between us on the subject.

Charles Percival's wife was one of the most perfect human beings I ever saw. She was very fair, with large clear blue eyes that seemed to look into your soul through the force of her own pure and single character. She was devoted to her husband, and he was equally devoted to her. He was demonstrative in his manner to his young wife, more so than I generally like to see, but nothing that he did ever seemed out of place; and she was such a little, fair, winning creature that one almost expected to see her caressed and made much of at all times as a matter of course.

Mrs. Percival was in appearance gentle and childlike, but she was of a very decided character, and a character calculated to act well upon the most faulty parts of her husband's character. She was deeply and earnestly religious, in theory and in practice. He was all right in theory; he knew what was right as well or better than most men; but long habits of self-indulgent thoughtlessness, and of mixing with a world where everything had tended to encourage what was evil in him, made his practice fall far short of his theory; and, what was more fatal still in its effects upon his character, made him judge himself lightly and leniently, whatever evil he had done. Mrs. Percival saw things more clearly through the light of her own holiness; and I could already see the effect of her character upon him in occasional attempts that he made to condemn what had been light, or frivolous, or wrong in his previous life; and he talked well of repentance, and of beginning a new life. Truly, if he ever does so, he has a ministering angel beside him; but when temptation to pleasure comes, his resolutions are apt to fade away VOL. XXIII.

for the moment, to arise like the Phœnix from the ashes again, when the

pleasure is exhausted, and the ashes only remain.

I saw Charles and Madeline meet; and I saw the watchful gaze he fixed on her face. I felt that he was looking to see whether his influence were gone. I have told you already he was kind-hearted, and would not have given pain to any one: but here was the besetting sin of his nature. I felt that he would actually be grieved and disappointed if he saw that Madeline had entirely shaken off his influence. She met him quite calmly; I could not trace any emotion on her features. I glanced from her to him. I saw that he continued to watch her; I saw that a satisfied and half-triumphant smile lit his countenance. I looked at her again: her eyes were lowered—that was all; but in that he read his power, and he was pleased. Man—heartless man—you know not what woman's love is—its endurance, and its anguish.

Days passed on, and that visit was certainly no visit of pleasure to me. I saw poor Madeline again fascinated, enchained. I saw that she yielded up her whole soul to the charm of his presence; and when I remonstrated with her, and tried to alarm her delicacy with the terror of attracting remark from others, and even ventured to speak of the unfeminine position in which she placed herself in the sacred presence of a wife; when I spoke of these things, I was silenced by the hopeless anguish of

her expression as she anwered my remonstrances.

How strangely he sought her society during the first days of that visit. How entirely she gave herself up to the enjoyment of the moment; and how calmly the high-minded wife sat and watched them, with no suspicion of the storm that raged in the quiet Madeline's soul. I almost hated him when I watched him, with a word or a look, add strength to the chain which he knew so well bound her. I could not see why he selected her as a victim. If she had been beautiful I could have understood it better, for bright eyes never looked vainly on him; but she had no claims at all to beauty. There was absolutely nothing about her to attract a man like him—nothing; and yet he seemed deliberately to fascinate her, and she could not escape. He could not resist the pleasureable excitement of playing on the strings of a heart that he only had awakened to music. Alas! the strings were breaking, one by one.

I have said that he was quick-sighted for the feelings of others; and I saw before a fortnight had passed that he had read Madeline's heart almost as well as I did; and then—then I saw that he repented. He suddenly ceased to seek her society; he read no more to her; he walked no more with her; he avoided her as much as possible; he never conversed alone with her; and Madeline, who had trembled and quivered under his attentions, became cold, and as it were paralysed, when she marked the change. Despair and failing health will break the proudest spirit; and when I saw Madeline's frigid, stony look, I felt afraid for her,

and I forced her to speak to me of her feelings.

"Why does he take his friendship from me?" she said, passionately. "It is the only thing I value in the world, and surely I have a claim on

that. He knows that I have. He is ungenerous now."

Alas! poor child! I would not tell her that I felt that the man of the world, awaking to better influences, had seen into the depths of her broken

heart, and afraid and grieved at his own work, thought, by turning from her now, to heal the incurable wound he had inflicted. The intercourse that he had begun as a pleasant pastime, and continued as an exciting interest, had suddenly appeared before him in a different light, as fatal to her peace; and he mourned his own conduct deeply, and thought to atone for it by entirely estranging himself from her. He was wrong—it was too late. The heart-strings were overstrained, and the shock broke them.

He did not thoroughly understand Madeline, or he never would have turned suddenly from her with the hope of her feelings changing. Whilst he continued to seek and to enjoy her society, Madeline continued to feel the charm working, the indefinable and omnipotent charm that his presence had for her; and she would have returned home again to endure on—but with comparatively tranquil feelings. She saw him turn coldly from her, and she felt then, for the first time, as if he had been deliberately trifling with her feelings, and were wearied of doing so; and this added to her suffering the agony of bitter mortification and self-contempt—and those feelings are torture to a woman.

I knew what she suffered then by the few, the very few words that were wrung from her quivering lips, that sounded like reproach to one whom she idolised. She had thought she possessed his real friendship, and that he valued her friendship. When his change of manner denied

her that belief, life had nothing more to offer her.

When old Mr. Vernon laid his daughter in the green churchyard three months afterwards, no one said that she died of a broken heart. I believe they talked of rapid decline having carried her off, and said there was consumption in her mother's family. But Aunt Mary remembered the little country inn, and she knew that the image which had sunk into Madeline's soul had remained there, and had weighed her down till she died.

Let this slight sketch of Madeline Vernon's fate be a warning to those who thoughtlessly and wantonly trifle with such sacred and uncontrollable feelings as the heart's affections. I do not speak to those who deliberately do this, finding pleasure in the torture of others. I speak to those who, like Charles Percival, intend no evil; but who have been gifted by nature with a warm, affectionate heart, with unbounded fascination of mind and manner, and who find a tempting excitement in trying to work on the feelings of every attractive woman whom they meet. Repentance comes to such an one when the blighting effects of his work are too visible to be overlooked, but that repentance comes too late to heal the broken heart.

Madeline's fate was to him a passing sorrow, but certainly a sorrow, for in his inmost heart he condemned himself. He might have known from the beginning that she was neither by nature nor education one of those with whom such intercourse as they had held together could be lightly held—suddenly broken—and then quietly forgotten. He did know that the impression he had made on her soul was not transient, and the more he felt this—yea, the more the earnestness of her nature became apparent to him—the more irresistible it had seemed to be to him to draw out that nature, to

mingle his spirit with hers—until the moment came when her anguish became visible to his searching eye, and he turned suddenly from her. The sunshine gone, the flower droops and dies, and Madeline died gently; while he turned to his wife, and forgot in her deep love the unwelcome but passionate emotions that he had wantonly done his best to excite in another, and then left to consume her.

Look into your husband's soul, loving and pure wife. It bears traces of God's workmanship still, and whatever the errors of his early life may have been, your gentle voice, your holy example, your devoted affection,

may still present that soul pure before its God.

Madeline Vernon will not rise to accuse him at that day.

FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss Julia Addison,

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

CHAPTER XLIX.

Oh, had we never, never met,
Or could this heart e'en now forget
How linked, how blest we might have been,
Had Fate not frowned so dark between.

MOORE.

THE next morning brought the joyful news that Pemberton was better.

Mr. Harley was half wild with delight.

"Dr. Davis thinks him out of danger," he exclaimed, when he joined the party assembled at breakfast; "and he has spoken to me twice. Once it was to say, 'Don't be alarmed about me, my kind friend,' and the other time to ask about a person who—who—he fancied was dead, and about whom I undeceived him."

Having once begun to mend, Pemberton recovered rapidly, and at the expiration of a week was able to come down into the drawing-room. He was pale and wasted, and extremely weak; but he was cheerful and patient, and evinced none of that peevishness and irritation so common

with the stronger sex when suffering pain or illness.

Florence, whose recovery was much less rapid, had only been able to leave her room the day before. She looked pale and delicate, but very lovely; and Mr. Harley's sallow, though well-formed and expressive features, were flushed with pleasure as he led her in to see Pemberton, who, with his arm in a sling, was lying on a sofa, the old gentleman meanwhile saying to himself:

"Perhaps this time next year this young couple that I am so much

interested about may be visiting me as husband and wife?"

"There, Pemberton," he said, as he entered with Florence on his arm, followed by Gertrude, "I have brought you two rosebuds—a white and

a red one. But you must not start up," he added, hastily. "Remember your promise, and Dr. Davis's orders that you were to keep quite quiet. I will take both the rosebuds away again."

"No; pray do not," said Pemberton. "I will be very obedient."
"Then I will permit you to shake hands with the young ladies," said
Mr. Harley. But none of the party had waited for this permission.

The old gentleman remarked with pleasure that Florence's eyes filled with tears as she pressed the invalid's hand, and that Pemberton's manner towards her was kind and even affectionate, while in addressing Ger-

trude he was slightly embarrassed.

"All just as it should be," he soliloquised, as he wheeled an arm-chair close to the sofa and placed Florence in it, while Gertrude seated herself at a little distance. "I will contrive by-and-by, if I can, to leave them alone together. I long to have it all settled—to feel sure that he will enjoy the happiness it was not my lot to attain."

He sighed involuntarily, although in justice to him it must be said that he was far more occupied with thoughts of the young lovers, as he sup-

posed them, than with merely selfish considerations.

Pemberton remarked his melancholy. "My dear sir," he said kindly, "I fear you are over-fatigued with such constant attendance on me."

"Oh no—no; I am not, indeed," replied Mr. Harley. "Pray do not take that fancy into your head. Miss Gertrude," he added, after they had all conversed for a little time longer, "there are some new and curious plants in the greenhouse which my gardener brought home yesterday, and which I want you to see, as you are fond of flowers. Will you come with me?"

Gertrude instantly rose, but Pemberton exclaimed: "My dear Mr. Harley, pray do not break up our little coterie so soon. Only consider how long I have been deprived of the pleasure of ladies' society by my illness. As you have just made an addition to your greenhouse, you cannot want to take more rosebuds there to day; or, at any rate, the new plants will look just as curious and beautiful after dinner."

Seeing by his manner that he was quite in earnest, the old gentleman gave up the point for the present. Soon afterwards his sister came into

the room to tell Florence that her luncheon was ready.

"I will go with you to the dining-room," she added, "and we will

leave Gertrude and my brother to take care of Mr. Pemberton."

Mr. Harley, though earnestly wishing both his sister and the luncheon further, could say nothing against this arrangement. In a few minutes he was himself summoned out of the room to see a person on business.

"The wrong one!" he mentally exclaimed, as he quitted the room.

"How tiresome, after all my efforts!"

If he could have seen Pemberton's heart he would not have thought so, or at least not for the same reason. Pemberton had long admired Gertrude's beauty and engaging manners, and when he came to be for many days in the same house with her at Teesdale, every hour seemed to show him some new charm of mind or person. Her sweet temper, her kindness and tenderness of feeling, her devotion to Florence, and forgetfulness of herself, had won upon him more and more; and her artlessness and simplicity were peculiarly calculated to attract and fix the atten-

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tion of one who, having from boyhood seen a great deal of the world and fashionable society, had been early disgusted with the affectation and frivolity too frequently met with; and had learned to value such a character as Gertrude's. Many times had he longed to declare his love, but he had always been restrained by the thought that as she would have little or no fortune, and as he had but three hundred a year, he should never be able to marry her.

"It would be cruel to try to win her affections under these circumstances," he argued; "and it shall therefore be my study not to betray

my feelings by word or look."

He had hitherto acted in pursuance of this resolution, but every day he felt more and more how much his happiness was involved. The meeting her again at Mr. Harley's revived and strengthened feelings already very powerful; for gay, lively, and thoughtless as he appeared, Pemberton had a heart capable of sincere and deep attachment.

On being left alone with Gertrude, he was more than ever tempted to

declare his sentiments.

"But it would be selfish," he argued, "and worse than useless. I will

be firm to my resolution."

Whilst these and other thoughts were passing in his breast, he lay still and silent with one hand pressed to his forehead, and the expression of his face so grave and pensive, that Gertrude, after he had continued thus for some minutes, began to be alarmed, and her fears lest he should be more ill conquering her timidity, she rose from her seat, and going up to him, asked if he was worse.

He started at the sound of her voice, and answered hastily, scarcely

knowing what he said:

"No, no-why should you think so?"

"Because," answered Gertrude, hesitating—"because you are so unusually silent and grave, and have sighed several times very deeply."

"Have I, indeed?" said Pemberton. "It was quite unconsciously, then." He sighed again as he spoke, but quickly recollecting himself,

forced a smile, and made some remark upon the weather.

But Gertrude, who thought he was endeavouring to conceal feelings of increased illness, in which opinion she was confirmed by seeing the flush which had for a moment appeared on his cheek give place to a greater paleness than before, instead of answering his observation, said:

"Cannot I get you anything, or shall I call Mr. Harley? I am sure

you feel more ill."

"Indeed, I assure you I do not," said Pemberton, thinking as he gazed on her sweet face, which looked more interesting than ever, now that it was shaded with anxiety and concern on his account, that he must for the future avoid her as much as possible, or he should never be able to keep his resolution. Avoid her! The thought was wretchedness. But what else could he—ought he to do, both for her sake and his own?

After trying for some time to converse calmly with Gertrude on indifferent subjects, and finding he was unable to do so, he complained of faintness and exhaustion, which indeed he really felt, and begged her to go and take her usual walk, as he should be better left by himself. As she was hastily crossing the hall to seek her host or hostess, Gertrude met Miss Harley, who asked her if she would like to take a drive with

the rest of the ladies.

"Yes, I should," replied Gertrude. "But I was coming to speak to you about Mr. Pemberton. I am sure something must be the matter with him, though he says there is not, for he does not seem like himself

"We will send my brother to him," replied Miss Harley. "He is disengaged now, I believe. Oh, there he is, coming out of the library."

She repeated what Gertrude had said; and Mr. Harley, scarcely staying till she had finished speaking, repaired to the drawing-room. When he entered, Pemberton was standing near the window, leaning upon the back of a chair.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the old gentleman, "what is this?"

"I wanted to try my strength, sir; that is all."

"Try your strength, indeed!" repeated Mr. Harley. "Yes, you are doing that with a vengeance. You know you are too weak for such experiments. Come, let me lead you back to the sofa. You look ready to faint—how can you be so foolish."

"I-I fear I must leave you in a few days, sir," said Pemberton, when

he had a little recovered himself.

Mr. Harley gave a sudden start at this most unexpected speech, and exclaimed:

"Good Heavens! are you mad? What in the world is the matter?"

"Why," stammered Pemberton, "I-I-the fact is-I mean I find that—that I am unable to stay here any longer."

"What do you mean?" cried Mr. Harley. "They tell me," he added, looking at him earnestly, "that you are more ill. Is it the case?"

"No," answered Pemberton.

"Then, why are you so pale and agitated? and why do you talk of leaving me? Have I said or done anything to displease you?"

"My dear sir," cried Pemberton, his eyes filling with tears, "how can you pain me by such a question? You, who have behaved to me like a father, and shown me such kindness as I can never hope to repay! But I am low-spirited, unhappy—

"And you will be more cheerful elsewhere," said the old man, in a

subdued and grieved voice. "Well, I cannot wonder at that."

"I shall be ten times more sad and miserable!" exclaimed Pemberton. "Do not, my dear friend, thus misunderstand me."

"I will try not," said Mr. Harley; "but I confess I do not understand

"Will you believe," said Pemberton, "that I leave you and your amiable sister with the deepest regret; that I shall never forget your kindness; and that it would grieve me beyond measure to think that I

should not always retain your esteem and friendship?"

"No," answered his host, "indeed I cannot; if these were really your sentiments, you would not be so eager to quit us without a cause. have had no letters except that one from your brother, which you showed to me, so that I know you are not summoned away by busi"Yet it is not without a cause," said Pemberton. "Come, I will tell you all," he added, finding it was impossible to pacify the old man. "I love—one to whom there is an insuperable obstacle to my ever being united. I have, therefore, vowed never to speak to her of my love; but I dare not trust myself to remain where I am daily and hourly in her presence, feeling that every day and every hour deepens my attachment, and—and renders me more unhappy."

"An insuperable obstacle!" repeated his companion. "An insuper-

able obstacle!"

"Yes, indeed," said Pemberton. "And now, I trust, I have cleared myself, and that you will admit I do right to leave your hospitable roof

as soon as I am able."

"I admit no such thing!" cried the old gentleman. "I do not believe there is an insuperable obstacle; at any rate, I will not till I have tried to surmount it. You cannot think how much I have your happiness at heart."

"Thank you most sincerely," said Pemberton, taking the old man's hand. "I have the highest opinion of your powers and judgment, but, believe me, this is a case in which you could do nothing."

"And this obstacle is --- ?" said Mr. Harley.

"My dear sir," said Pemberton, "if you knew how painful it is to me to speak even to you on this subject, I feel sure you would press me no further."

He said this in so earnest and serious a manner, that Mr. Harley was

forced, though very reluctantly, to be silent.

After sitting for about five minutes ruminating with a very melancholy countenance, a sudden thought struck him, and, starting up, he hastily quitted the room.

"Was Lady Seagrove of the party who are gone out in the carriage?"

he demanded of a servant whom he met in crossing the hall.

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

" Are you sure?"
" Quite certain, sir."

Muttering an exclamation of impatience, he returned to the drawing-room, which, however—feeling it impossible to do anything but pace backwards and forwards—he soon quitted, lest he should disturb Pemberton, and repaired to his study, where, after counting the minutes for two whole hours, which seemed quite interminable, he had at last the pleasure of seeing the carriage return. As soon as the party had entered the house, he seized upon Lady Seagrove, and begging that she would grant him the favour of a quarter of an hour's conversation, tête-à-tête, conducted her into his study, placed her in an arm-chair, and took a seat beside her. Lady Seagrove looked at him somewhat nervously, and produced her salts; which he observing, said, "Do not be alarmed; I simply want to ask you one question. Forgive me if I have been too abrupt. I will come at once to the point. Should you object to Mr. Pemberton as the husband of your adopted daughter?"

Surprise prevented Lady Seagrove from replying for some moments. "You think me impertinent, no doubt," continued Mr. Harley, "for presuming thus to question you; but when you have heard my reasons,

you will, I think, pardon me. Believe me that neither of the parties concerned had the remotest idea that I was going to make this application. The fact is, that Pemberton having announced to me his intention of departing in a day or two, I with much difficulty learned that it was on account of there being an insurmountable obstacle to his marrying Florence. What that obstacle was he would not tell me, but I could think of nothing but your withholding your consent. Now, I have known so much of the misery of preventing the union of young persons who sincerely love each other, that——"

He paused a moment.

"My dear Mr. Harley," Lady Seagrove hastened to reply, "be assured I am far from thinking your interference impertinent. On the contrary, I am certain that you are influenced by the best and kindest motives. I am quite convinced of the folly of trying to force a girl's inclinations; and Adolphus Pemberton, both as to character and family, is so unexceptionable, that my consent would never be an obstacle, if Florence loved him; for though his family is very poor, she will have enough fortune——"

"If Florence loved him!" interrupted the old gentleman. "Is that the only if? Then I shall very soon see my young friend happy. I will

go and set his mind at ease instantly."

"Stay a moment," said Lady Seagrove, laying her hand on his arm.

"You are mistaken. Florence does not love Pemberton."

Mr. Harley started; but a moment afterwards smiled incredulously, and said, "I can easily believe she has not told you her feelings towards him, for he has never spoken to her of his love. But surely you must have read in her looks, and words, and manner, that she feels for

him no common degree of interest."

"I believe she does," answered Lady Seagrove. "They were play-fellows when his father and mother lived at the castle, within a short walk of Seagrove Hall, and Lady Swellington and I met nearly every day. The two young people, as I believed, always entertained a warm friend-ship for each other. I never suspected till to-day that on Pemberton's side it was a deeper feeling; on Florence's I am sure it is not. If she had loved him, much past, and I fear much future, unhappiness might have been spared the poor girl; but her heart is, and long has been, devoted to another."

Mr. Harley was speechless.

"She has many times," pursued her ladyship, "owned to me her love for the person to whom I allude, and declared that she would never marry any one else."

"Alas, alas, poor Pemberton!" exclaimed the old gentleman, leaning back in his chair with a look of great distress. "Then it is true there

is no hope for you. The obstacle is indeed insuperable."

"My dear brother," said Miss Harley, as she entered his study about a quarter of an hour after this conversation with Lady Seagrove, "how could you allow Mr. Pemberton to get so excited. He is quite in a fever again, and Dr. Davis, who has just seen him, says that his mind really must be kept tranquil."

"Good Heavens! and have I not been exerting myself all the morning

in order that his mind might be kept tranquil?" exclaimed the old gentleman, piteously.

Miss Harley looked at him as if for explanation; but he saw not her

look, and rising hastily, again sought the drawing-room.

"My dear boy," he exclaimed, "for Heaven's sake try to keep up your spirits. When a thing is hopeless, as I am now convinced your affair is, our only resource is fortitude."

"As you are now convinced it is!" repeated Pemberton, starting from his recumbent posture. "What do you mean? What have you

been saying or doing?-Speak, for Heaven's sake!"

"Don't be so vehement, then," said Mr. Harley, "and I will tell you. I have merely been sounding Lady Seagrove on the subject."

"Lady Seagrove!" exclaimed Pemberton.

"I thought it was her consent that you wanted," continued Mr. Harley.
"Her consent—no!" cried Pemberton. "What could have put that into your head?"

"I found my mistake," said Mr. Harley.

"So I should imagine. Lady Seagrove has nothing in the world to do with her."

"Almost anything," muttered the old gentleman, as if speaking to himself — "almost anything I would undertake to overcome; but a successful rival in her affections—I never anticipated that."

"A what!" cried Pemberton, the colour mounting in his cheeks, and

almost gasping for breath.

"Why—why, surely you must have known it," stammered his companion.

"Known what?" said Pemberton, scarcely able to articulate.

That her heart has been long pre-engaged," said Mr. Harley.

Every tinge of colour fled from Pemberton's face, and for some moments he was like one stunned.

At last he asked, in a faint voice, "Do you know-who-who is-"

"No," answered Mr. Harley, guessing what he meant. "But dopray do be composed. You will kill yourself with all this agitation."

"I cannot just at present," replied Pemberton, in a broken voice.

"This shock is as dreadful as it is unexpected; I little thought half an hour ago, that it was possible to be so much more miserable."

He leaned back on the sofa, and pressed his hand to his forehead.

Mr. Harley looked at him with an expression of deep compassion and sorrow.

"I must say," he observed, thoughtfully, after a pause, "I did not expect that Florence-"

"Florence!" repeated Pemberton, suddenly bending forward. "Is it possible that—that—"

He could not get out a word more.

"That I have been speaking of Florence all along," said the old gentleman; the possibility of his having made a mistake at length glancing into his mind. "Is it not Florence you are in love with?"

"No," said Pemberton-"no. Then Heaven be thanked, you were

not speaking of Gertrude!"

"Confound my stupidity!" cried Mr. Harley; "and I have been making you so miserable, and all for nothing!"

There was a silence, which Pemberton broke by saying, with a sigh: "I know not why I should be so rejoiced to hear that she is not engaged. Since she can never be mine, I ought to wish to see her happy in her love for another; but I cannot yet feel thus philosophical."

"You will not tell me why she can never be yours, then?" said Mr. Harley. "I cannot expect you should, after having made one such

egregious blunder."

"Yes I will," said Pemberton, "since you desire to know; upon condition that you will promise never to speak to me on the subject again."

Mr. Harley nodded, and he continued:

"I am the youngest son of one of the poorest and most extravagant viscounts in the kingdom; one of ten children, all of whom are living. Would it not be the height of absurdity to try and persuade a girl utterly without fortune to marry me, and leave the comforts and luxuries of her home to become the wife of a man with three hundred a year?"

"Humph!" replied Mr. Harley, "I cannot say but that it would. Love in a cottage is all very well in theory, but it won't do in practice. I honour you for your sense and right feeling, my dear young friend."

Having said this in a careless and lively manner, which Pemberton thought very ill-suited to the occasion, he commenced whistling an air; and after looking out of the window a few moments, walked out of the room.

"Sympathising!" said Pemberton to himself. "Well, I can feel still more for poor Wentworth, now that I am much in the same predica-Yet in one respect Wentworth is better off than I am, for he knows that she whom he loves returns his affection, and that consciousness alone must confer happiness which I would give worlds to possess!"

THE LAY OF THE WOULD-BE NOVELIST.

I'd be an Author to gain a renown, And deluge with writings the country and town, Till the sons of fair England, so merry and free, Would join in admiring and envying me.

To my sight in the vista of forthcoming years Full many a Three-Volumed Novel appears; Half-a-guinea a volume! how joyful to see, And a copy sent out to each Library.

I'd earn for my writings such tributes of praise, That THACKERAY 'd fear for his well-deserved bays, And DICKENS turn pale when he hears of my name, That has earned as an Author such glory and fame.

Nor should AINSWORTH, romantic and wondrous, forget His career as an Author is not finished yet; But fearing a rival he'd pour forth again Romances in heaps from his ne'er failing brain.

WAS IT A GHOST?

I AM very superstitious. I know, and lament it. I have tried to subdue this tendency, but it will not leave me. It is part and parcel of

myself; and all I can do, it will not go.

My mother was superstitious — my father superstitious; and it has descended to all their children, some of whom are avowed, others concealed ghost-seers. To none of them, I believe, has the faculty clung more closely than to myself. I am quite certain that I do see and feel what others cannot. Perhaps, if I could fathom the depths of mesmerism, I might discover something to enlighten me on these matters; as it is, I can merely assert that the saying, "Coming events cast their shadows before," is no mere proverb with me, but, more than once in my life (I write it in all fear), has proved a decided and tangible reality.

Some years since, I was going to leave home for a month. Such were the strange and melancholy feelings aroused in my mind by the contemplation of this little trip (I had been accustomed to be absent for six or eight months at a time), that I felt fully convinced I should never return to the home of my youth. As I was going to travel by railway, I took it into my head that this foreboding was but the presentiment of some horrible accident; and so great was my terror that I delayed my journey several days, and busied myself in the interval with setting my

small affairs in order, and destroying letters, papers, &c.

My stay was to have been but a month, and at the expiration of that time I made preparations for returning. But it was otherwise ordered. Circumstances (of no very painful nature, it is true) prevented my return

for nearly three years, and then it was no longer "my home."

Only the other morning I awoke in a great fright. I dreamt that a person I knew came into the room, holding a newspaper, and told me he was grieved to see poor ——'s death, mentioning the name of one of my brothers. I started up in great sorrow, as you may imagine.

"It cannot be true," I exclaimed; "they would surely have written

to me if it had been so."

"Well," was the answer, "here it is in the newspaper."

"It may be true," I replied at length, "for I have had very disagreeable dreams the last night or two, and I thought I should hear something distressing to-morrow; perhaps I shall get a letter about it then."

I was very much agitated, and in the morning mentioned the circum-

stance to a friend, who only laughed.

One o'clock brought the postman, who handed in a newspaper. We were seated before the fire, reading, when I suddenly saw J——'s countenance change, and he looked at me in an odd manner.

"Dear me," I cried, "what's the matter? How odd you look."
"See," he replied, "there is ——'s name among the deaths."

I looked; it was not my brother, but a distant connexion of the same name, who had died in America. The circumstance struck me as sufficiently curious to mention.

But all this is merely to introduce a strange story, which I will relate as faithfully as memory will allow.

THE STORY.

Miss C- was a tall, masculine woman, with a very strong mind. No one ever told such thrilling ghost-stories as she did. She had lived nearly all her days in the West Indies, and was learned in many of the negro legends and witcheries. When she had set a whole party of us younger ones shivering and shaking at her relations, she would reproach us for our cowardice. What was there to be afraid of in a ghost? Could it rob, or kill you, as a fellow-man might? I am sure, some one would venture to remark, I should die of fright! Fright! sneered the strongminded woman; I tell you there's nothing to be frightened at in a ghost. I have seen two; and I was not the least alarmed. And then would follow the oft-repeated tale of how she had on two different occasions seen two different people enter the room where she was sitting, whom she had supposed were on the other side of the globe; and how, on rising to embrace them, they had gently left the room without speaking. In both cases, if I remember right, she had, after the lapse of some months, heard they had died at the time they had appeared to her.

I was always a great favourite with her, from my implicit belief in all her wonders; but I had lost sight of her for years, when one day I was surprised by receiving a letter, dated from some out-of-the-way-corner in the west of England, begging me to come and spend a few weeks with her. It was a part of the country I knew little of, and being fond of travelling, and wishing to renew my acquaintance, I accepted the invi-

tation.

It was on a lovely summer's evening that I arrived at Elmscott Manor House; for so Miss C——'s residence was called. As the carriage stopped on the summit of the last hill, that the postboy might adjust the drag before descending what was little removed from a precipice, the view was most enchanting. Three or four hundred feet below, in the bottom of the valley, lay the old Manor House, with its long irregular front, peaked gables, and trim old-fashioned garden. The front of the house faced down the valley, towards the sea, which was now like a calm, beautiful lake, lit with all the glory of the setting sun, while here and there a white sail was visible, which seemed to render the blue still more intense from the contrast. The valley and the hills on one side were in deep shadow, while opposite to where we stood the sun still gilded the land-scape. Behind the house the valley divided into two forks, which gradually narrowed till they reached the moor above. This part of the valley was covered with deep oak woods, such as are rarely seen so near the sea.

We descended by a steep, circuitous road, which would have been considered impassable by any but Devonshire horses and postboys. There is an old joke, that the Devonshire coat of arms is a broken-knee'd horse. I think the horse who rubbed his tail off going down-hill would be more appropriate, as certainly the horses of the country are marvellously surefooted. How they have either knees or tails is a mystery, considering that if they are not going up-hill they must be going down, so that those

parts are in perpetual danger.

Elmscott was a place after my own heart; old-fashioned and secluded.

The garden was perfect—such myrtles! such evergreens! The old orchard close by was the exact picture of what an orchard ought to be, mossy, cool, and mysterious, with a brawling stream running through it. At the end of the orchard a little path led to a grove of walnut-trees, such superb old giants they were. In fact, the whole place was perfectly bewitching.

"How did you discover this paradise," I inquired of Miss C-, as

after tea she was showing me all her treasures.

"I saw it advertised in a county paper at Exeter," she replied, "when I was staying there last year, and rather fancying the place from the description given, as well as the moderate rent asked, I came to the neighbouring town, saw the place and the proprietor, whose great object was to get a respectable tenant; and here I am installed, and I should be very sorry if anything should arise to oblige me to quit it."

I looked around with delight on the scene; the pretty cottages perched on the hill sides, the little hamlet in the bottom between the house and the sea, the woods, the stream, all formed such a picture as makes one's heart swell with some indescribable emotion, and the tears find ready

access to one's eyes.

"My dear friend!" I exclaimed, "it was really kind of you to invite me to this lovely spot."

"I thought you would like it," she replied.

The room allotted to me was a cheerful little chamber, with two nice old casement windows looking towards the sea, which was just visible between the hills. Between the windows stood a dressing-table, opposite to which was the small bed, with its white dimity hangings. The fire-place was one of those curious three-cornered projections one occasionally sees in old houses, and was in the corner opposite the door, leaving room for a chest of drawers between it and the window. Why I am so particular in describing the room and its furniture you will soon see.

The first night of my sojourn at Elmscott, being most thoroughly tired, I went early to bed, and soon was in a deep refreshing slumber. I slept till dawn, as I imagine, for, when aroused by some noise in the house (which I concluded was caused by the servants moving about), my room was quite light. However, I was very tired, and so, giving myself a turn, fell asleep again. I spent the next day in exploring the neighbourhood, rambling on the beach, climbing cliffs, gathering wild flowers, collecting sea-weeds, and all those pleasant little amusements with which

the country abounds.

My second night was destined to be a troubled one. I lay musing, unable to sleep, in that nervous excited state that one gets into sometimes from being in a new place, and seeing new sights. I know not what o'clock it was, but it must have been near midnight, when I heard footsteps approach my door; they had the sound of a person wishing to walk without being heard. The handle of my door was turned, and as I moved my face in that direction to see who the intruder could be, it opened, and an old grey-headed man entered. He held a light in his hand, and in spite of my terror, which incapacitated me either from moving or speaking, I noticed that he was habited in a loose overcoat, short breeches, which were unbuttoned at the knee, and thick grey worsted stockings, which hung loosely about his legs. He had no shoes on, which accounted for the muffled sound of his steps. He did not appear to

notice me, but walking across the room opened a door which I had not observed—indeed, it was just where the drawers stood. However, the door stood open, and I could see into the room beyond. The furniture, as far as I could see, was scanty; opposite the door was an old-fashioned bedstead with blue-and-white checked hangings. The old man went to the bed, drew aside the curtains, and leaned over it. I saw a knife glistening in his hand, and then I heard a faint cry, followed by low agonising groans. I tried to give an alarm, but in vain; my tongue was tied. After the lapse of a few moments the old man returned—and horror! there was blood upon his hands. I fainted; and it was bright shining day ere I came to myself.

My first thought on rising was the unnoticed door. But there, where I had seen the old man both enter and return, stood the chest of drawers undisturbed. However, on examining the wall behind them carefully, I could trace the mark as if a door had been stopped up. The mark was certainly there, but I tried to persuade myself that my nocturnal adven-

ture was but an awful vision of the night.

I must own I was rather disinclined to retire alone the next night, and the strength of the arguments I had used to myself in broad daylight against the possibility of the old man being anything but a dream, faded away with the sun's last rays; nevertheless, I was afraid of telling Miss C— my alarm, as she never allowed any one to see a ghost but herself,

and I should have been well laughed at for my pains.

I summoned all my courage, and it was all needed; for again I was aroused by the footsteps, and again was the tragedy of the preceding night re-acted. It's all very well to laugh at people for being fanciful and nervous, but to witness this sort of scene two nights running was more than my nerves would stand; so as soon as daylight brought renewed strength and confidence, I sprang from my bed, and packing up all my goods and chattels, despatched a messenger to the nearest town for post-horses.

At breakfast I apologised to Miss C- for being obliged to leave

her very suddenly.

"Going!" she exclaimed; "why I thought I had got you safe for at least three months; what in the name of fortune has made you take such a freak into your head?"

"I know you will think me very foolish," I replied, (" but I really cannot help it; the sights and sounds have been so awful in this house

during my short stay, that I can stand it no longer."

As I anticipated, Miss C—— was very angry with me for "my non-sense," but I was more afraid of the ghost than of her, and so, in spite of all her ridicule and persuasions, I persisted in my resolution of departing, and soon left the enchanting-looking Manor House behind me.

One day, many months after my departure from Elmscott, I received a thick packet from Miss C-, of which the following is a copy:

I have been obliged to quit Elmscott. I was only able to remain there a month or two after your departure; and it is because I believe you were a witness to scenes similar to those I shall record, that I send you this account of my troubles. I think I told you how I was attracted to Elmscott by an advertisement. When I arrived at the inn at—,

and inquired about the house and owner, I saw by the waiter's manner that there was some mystery attached to the place, and led him to speak about it. However, all I could get out of him was that the house was a wisht place, haunted, overlooked, or something of that kind, and that every one who had tried to live there had been so annoyed that they had speedily quitted the house and neighbourhood. I laughed as usual at the idea of ghosts, or haunted houses, saying, "Well, I'm going to live there, and it will be a clever ghost that unlodges me, if I like Elmscott."

I installed myself at the Manor House, and, much to the surprise of the neighbours, professed myself perfectly satisfied with my abode at the end of three months' trial; and I certainly had no reason to change my

opinion till after you left me.

The sitting-room which I commonly occupied was, as you may remember, under your bedroom, and, as I believed, partly under a long loft which covered the offices. One evening I had sat up rather later than usual, and supposed all the household in bed, when I was startled by a footstep overhead. I was rather annoyed at the servants not having retired to rest, and wondered what any one could be doing in the unoccupied room. I must acknowledge that for a moment I was tempted to believe your story of the strange sounds you had heard, but I persuaded myself, after a few moments' consideration, that there was doubtless a body belonging to the steps, and determined that the next morning I would inquire who the wanderer was. However, I did not mention the circumstance till, having been annoyed in the same way five or six times, I insisted on knowing who the disturber of my meditations was. Every servant in the house denied all knowledge of the midnight walker, but the butler admitted he had occasionally heard noises, which he had attributed to rats, with which the house swarmed. In spite of these assurances I resolved to watch, but could discover nothing to throw any light upon the subject. I searched your room and the loft beyond, but without finding anything.

For a time the noises in the house ceased; but then a new discomfort arose. Whenever I walked in the garden I was disturbed by a second footstep on the gravel, following me. Go where I would the crackling gravel announced the vicinity of my unseen companion. Sometimes I heard mournful sighs and groans, that were enough to break one's heart

to hear.

About a month after your departure I was awoke one night by a noise in my room, and, lifting my head, I saw, standing at my writing-table, an old man. He was dressed in a loose coat, knee-breeches, and thick worsted stockings. In one hand he held a light, in the other a knife. After standing at the table a few moments he left the room, and I sprang from my bed and followed him. He went along the passage till he came to your room. He entered—I followed. He passed into a room beyond, of the existence of which I was perfectly ignorant. I still followed him. How can I ever describe what I witnessed in that horrible place? On an old-fashioned bed, with blue and white checked hangings, lay a woman, whose beauty was above compare. No painter could have pictured her loveliness worthily. As she lay peaceably asleep, her long lashes sweeping her fair cheek, the rosy lips half parted, showing teeth more dazzling than pearls, her splendid black hair streaming over the

pillow, she looked like some fair vision from a brighter world, who had deigned for a time to sojourn among men. Never in all my long life has such a dream of womanly beauty passed before my sight.

The old man went on, to the bedside; he leaned over the sleeping girl for a moment, the next I saw the gleam of the murderous knife, and then

it was buried in that fair, swan-like throat!

This was more than even my courage could stand, and I determined to leave the place as soon as possible. The morning of the day on which I was to take my departure from Elmscott, I was sitting in the dining-room, when the window became suddenly darkened, and looking up, I saw an old woman, with her face pressed against the glass, peering in at me inquisitively.

I must say I was thoroughly frightened; but, after a moment's reflection, I felt it was foolish, for the poor old creature appeared on the verge of the grave, and scarcely to have strength to stand. She beckoned

me to the casement, and I opened it.

"Lady," she said, in a low, tremulous voice, "I have heard you are going away, and I want to speak to you before you go. May I come in and sit down? I can do you no evil, lady; may I come?"

I told her "Yes," and she went to one of the windows which opened to the ground; and stepping in with the air of one familiar with the place,

took a chair near me.

She certainly was a most disagreeable object, and when she threw back the hood of her cloak, which had been closely drawn about her face, I recognised her as a person who was commonly looked on as a witch by the people round; and any accident that happened to men, cattle, or bees, was always laid to her charge.

"Lady," she said, after she had been seated a short time, "why are

you going to leave Elmscott?"

"I cannot imagine what business that can be of yours," I answered, rather vexed at being thus questioned, as I had resolved to tell no one the real reason.

"Don't speak to me that fashion," she replied, snappishly, "or I won't tell you what I came to tell. But I know why you are going. There are sounds in this old place it isn't pleasant to hear; sights, perhaps, not pleasant to be seen. Eh, lady, is it not so? Well, I remember this place when it was very different. Ah! if these walls could speak, they would tell strange ugly tales. 'Tis a shame disgrace should come on a good family, just for the paltry rent they get for the old house. You see, lady, when my master—that's the old man—why he died upwards sixty years agone-lived, he never let any folks come in this house for years but him and me, and when he died he made his son promise never to turn me out of Elmscott, but as long as I lived to let me live here; and I lived here many and many a long year. I was but a girl when the old man died, but I knew secrets about the family and the house they didn't care to have told. But it doesn't belong to the old stock now, and when these new ones came into possession they didn't heed the old charge about me, nor the warnings I gave them, and so they turned me out, and let the place just for the lust of gold—the passion that first brought sorrow and misery to this fair place. But they'll repent of it some day, depend upon it."

"I don't see," I interrupted, "why your being displaced from your

post should involve the respectability of the owner's family."

"No, you don't see, of course you don't," she returned; "but I'll just tell you. Those troubled spirits that walk this house knew 'twas no use appearing to me. They couldn't tell me anything I didn't know. I knew their hearts better than they did themselves. But when strangers came to live here, why they up and told; and though, as far as I know, folks that have lived here have never said what they have seen, still no one has stayed above a few months, or weeks, and little things have come out that prove Elmscott House isn't an agreeable residence."

"Well, and what is the mystery which hangs about this house?" I

inquired.

"I'll tell you, lady, if you care to hear," she replied. "I'm an old woman, and I'd like to die with a clean breast; I've never told a living soul, not even the master, what I know. Indeed, he wouldn't believe me; and when the tenants go away he's sure to charge me with it, but I'm innocent of their going. You've made up your mind, so it can't matter my telling you."

"Well," I said, "I've no time to waste; and what you have to say

you must say at once."

She heaved a deep sigh, and began as follows:

"Twixt sixty and seventy years ago this house was inhabited by my old master. He was great, or great-great, uncle to the present man—I don't know which. He was a nice, goodly gentleman once, so I've heard my mother tell; but I never remember him anything but a strange, harsh old man. In his youth, I've heard, he was very handsome, and very gay, and lived with all the fine folks away in London, till he spent 'most all his money, and his lands were deeply mortgaged; and when he had no money to spend, he came back here, and married a lady of this neighbourhood. She died not very long after they were married, leaving him an only son.

"They said he killed his wife. I don't know for certain, but I don't think it unlikely; however, if he loved anything on earth it was his son. But he never gave him any education like other gentlemen, and he was allowed to choose his associates where he would. I was the child of an old servant, and was his constant companion and friend. We grew up together; he was a year or two the elder, and as we grew my love for him increased till I worshipped him. He never loved me in return, but

as old playmate and friend.

"My master (I believe like many gentlemen of that time) was deeply engaged in smuggling, and this house, and the vaults under it, were the hiding-place of many a cargo, and many a chased smuggler. He was lord of the manor, and was not slow to claim any wreck which might chance to be thrown on shore. I was about sixteen when an event oc-

curred which roused all the wicked passions of my heart.

"'Twas a wild stormy night; we could hear the roar of the ocean as it dashed against the shore. Late in the evening a man came to say there was a large vessel stranded in a cove, under that great hill to the left youder. The master and his son went out at once to look after their rights. Just as day was breaking, Mr. Edward, that was master's son, came back, and he brought with him a lady whom they had managed to

rescue from the wreck. She was the most beautiful being eyes ever lighted on. Her hair was glossy black, and hung in great waves to her knees. I cannot bear to think of that bright face even now, though so many years have passed since I saw her. She was as good and gentle as she was lovely, and she soon made her way to the hearts of all who The night of the wreck the cold was more intense than I can describe, and a biting north wind swept over sea and land, from which the lady had escaped was one of the largest size, laden with a most choice and valuable cargo, on her return from South America to Spain. Through a constant succession of storms they had been driven from the right track, and getting into unknown seas without a pilot, were at length wrecked on this inhospitable shore. The next morning I went to see the wreck. As I walked along, I saw under the hedges groups of wretched negroes, who, refused shelter at the neighbouring cottages, had wandered about, and laid down to die, uncared for and unpitied. It was a fearful sight to see those poor fellows perishing from cold and hunger on land, when they had only just escaped the perils of the deep. Of that great crew not one single soul escaped but the lady. Numbers were drowned in attempting to reach the land, but many more perished from the wickedness of others. Lady, the people about here will tell you how they have often found, and still find, bones and skulls, which are believed to be those of the unfortunate black men who perished at that awful time.

"The lady who was saved must have been a princess in her own land; where that was I never learned, for when the cargo was brought to the house (the master got possession of nearly all of it), she claimed as her own several boxes filled with the choicest silks and jewels. Poor thing, 'twould have been better for her if she had never seen them!

"After she had been at the house a day or two she began to talk of going on to London, where a merchant or banker lived whom she knew by name. But it did not suit either of the gentlemen to let her go away so soon, and so excuse after excuse was formed to detain her. Young Mr. Edward loved her dearly—who could help it, she was so fair?—but she scorned him, and whenever he attempted to speak to her she would insist on being released from captivity, as she called her forced residence at the manor. At length Mr. Edward laid a plan for her to escape from his father. I was his confidante; but I knew that, whether she liked it or no, he would accompany her, and in an evil hour my jealousy of her overcame all my love for him and my interest in her, and I betrayed them to the old man. If she escaped he knew he should be obliged to give up her rich jewels, which he was loth to do, and also that the owners of the ship would reclaim the valuable cargo of which he had possessed himself. I little dreamed what misery my treachery would cause!

"The old man despatched his son on urgent business; his journey must occupy many days, and in the interval his father determined to rid himself of the Lady Isabella.

"The night Mr. Edward went away I heard the lady weeping, and imploring the master to let her go; she said he might have everything she possessed, and that she would take an oath never to reveal anything about the vessel or cargo if he would only give her her liberty. He said he would think about it, and bade her go to rest.

"I was standing in the hall when she left the room, and that was the last time I ever saw her alive or dead. Ever since her arrival at Elmscott she had occupied a room above the one we are now in, and there was no access to it but through the outside one. Next morning, when she did not come down at her usual time, I went up-stairs to call her, but the outside door was locked, and my master told me, when I mentioned it to him, that I was to think no more of Lady Isabella, as we used to call her, for that in spite of all his precautions she had escaped. However, that day he, and the only other servant besides myself employed in the house—a disagreeable, wicked old man, always at the master's beck and call for any wickedness—carefully bricked up the door of the lady's room, and from that day to this it has never been opened.

"When Mr. Edward came back, he was heart-broken at the disappearance of the stranger, and wanted to have the country searched; but his father found means to dissuade him, and the beautiful lady be-

came in a few years but an indistinct memory."

"And have you no idea," I inquired, "what really was the fate of

this hapless lady?"

"I'll tell you what became of her, if you can't guess," returned the old hag. "My master murdered her, and then built up the room to avoid discovery. There, that's my story, and my belief; and if you don't trust me, go and count the windows inside and outside this house, and see if there are the same number."

Such was Miss C.'s narration!

time the common topic of conversation.

The question will be asked, Was this a ghost? Reader! I have related to you the experience of two veritable women. You, infidel that you are, will probably say it was all a delusion, and the consequence of a heated imagination. However, I will add thus much in confirmation:—A dozen years passed, and I again visited the neighbourhood of Elmscott. I will not say I had forgotten the subject in the mean time, for I never could, and never shall forget it; but I had thought little about it, until my interest was again awakened by the following facts, at that

After many ineffectual attempts to let the Manor House as a gentleman's residence, the owner determined on letting it as a farm, and workmen were sent to put the old place in something like repair for its new occupants. An observant mason at once noticed the circumstance, that on one side of the house there were more windows than were accounted for by the rooms within. It was suggested that the mystery might be solved by making an opening in the roof, upon which the workmen were at the time employed; but fear and alarm, and, as soon as he heard of it, the imperative command of the landlord, made them speedily close it again. They beheld, so rumour spake, a small square room, an old tattered bed, and on the bed a yellow, dust-covered skeleton.

THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LIX.

WE must again conduct the reader into the spacious banqueting hall in which the Gueux first affixed to their association the ill-starred name that seemed to foretel its fortunes. There were now no tables groaning under its load of viands, or of silver flagons filled with rich wines. longer did mirthful shouts, and bursts of convivial gaiety, re-echo from the darkened rafters. A solitary table stood at one end of the vast apartment, at which sat a few staid councillors, seemingly poring over plans of fortifications that lay scattered upon it; but anxiety and painful expectation was visible on their countenances as they occasionally glanced from the corner where they sat huddled together, into the spacious emp-At the further extremity stood a knot of Spanish tiness around them. noblemen, solemn and cold, evidently awaiting the presence of Alba to feel or show any interest in what passed at the table. After the lapse of a quarter of an hour, during which not a word was spoken, the Counts of Egmont and Horn were ushered in; the former looked grave, the latter pale and discomposed.

"Already at your work?" said Egmont, pulling off his broidered glove, and taking the seat which the others proffered him. "But how is this, many are missing whom I thought to have met here to-day!"

"My brother-in-law Hoochstraaten," said Mansfeldt, "would not come. He still is, I fear me, disaffected to the government in spite of my entreaties and warnings, which he has rejected in the most uncordial manner."

"Yes, we who are so honoured as to be allied to the Count of Mansfeldt," said De Horn, "know the value of his affection for his kinsman. I think Hoochstraaten does well not to overdraw upon it; as for myself, I should not have been here to-day if Egmont had not persuaded me—that is to say, if I had not resolved to follow his footsteps wheresoever they lead, sure that nothing can happen to me that will not fall to his share."

"And making equally sure," replied Mansfeldt, "that no harm can befal him."

"Of course!" said Egmont, haughtily.

"I think," said De Horn, who was but ill at ease, "some of this honourable company have observed, like me, that Captain Sancho Davila has surrounded this mansion with troops, a discovery which seems to disturb them. What think you, Egmont?"

"A timid conscience makes one afraid of shadows," said Mansfeldt.

"The duke is late to-day," observed Egmont, without replying to the remark of either.

"And it is no use discussing matters till he comes," exclaimed De Horn, rising to conceal, or possibly dispel the embarrassment that grew

upon him more and more. Some of the gentlemen rose at the same time, and Egmont, unwilling to remain near Mansfeldt, imitated their example.

"I am afraid," said De Horn, coming up to him, and speaking in a whisper. "I do not know why—but I am to-day strongly tempted to remember a certain gay bout in this room, at which we may have drunk a glass too much."

"Hush!" said Egmont, "I also have thought of that unhappy banquet.

Alas! for the chance that ever brought us near it."

"Strange!" said De Horn. "Another recollection comes across me as I gaze on these tapestry hangings—do they bring no reminiscence to your mind?"

"None," replied the count, turning his eyes carelessly on the loom, which represented knights in their different attitudes of charge and fall.

"And those two cavaliers going down before that bold assailant with lance pointed to the heavens, as if his bare presence were sufficient to unhorse his opponents, do they remind you of nothing? Have you forgotten our misadventure some years back in the lists at Antwerp, where we were so singularly discomfited by Prince Philip?"

"You have a most infelicitous memory to-day," answered Egmont;

and a slight flush passed across his brow.

Steps were now heard approaching. All the councillors except Egmont, who remained standing, clustered round the table, and began to fumble with the papers, as if intent upon their task, when a side door opened, and Alba himself made his appearance, followed by his two sons. His countenance was overclouded; but this was so usual a thing with him that it scarcely attracted notice; his reception of the Count of Egmont was, however, courteous.

The scheme in agitation was that of a new citadel to be erected at Antwerp. The duchess had, indeed, already thought of this with a view to keep the inhabitants in awe; but money and time had been wanting to execute the design, and now Alba took the whole credit to himself as if the conception had solely originated with him. The duke wished to bring under discussion a plan designed by Count Paciotti, his own cousin; although it was sufficiently apparent he had made up his mind to adopt it; as in all cases connected with the Low Countries, it was a mere empty form to assemble and consult with their representatives about a measure that was already irrevocably decided. They all felt this; none more keenly than Egmont; but he had struggled long and manfully, even to the verge of rebellion, and as he would not pass that fearful point, there was nothing for it but to bow his head in silence to evils which time alone could redress. But when he heard Alba, with truly Spanish pomposity, dwell on his own military tactics and sagacity as evinced by this conception, he could no longer veil his sincerity, and plainly laid the merit to the right person, namely, the regent. The duke's anger seemed for a moment about to break forth; but by a strong effort he controlled it.

The sitting was unusually protracted, especially as no matter of importance was brought forward. Alba grew more silent with every moment, until at last the Grand Prior of Castille, who had left the apartment several times during the deliberation, re-entered, and approaching his father, whispered a few words in his ear. The duke immediately rose,

and pronouncing the conference at an end, took the Counts of Barlaimont and Mansfeldt aside, and in low but emphatic tones appeared to communicate something not altogether agreeable to them. They did not look positively astonished, but their countenances expressed something of consternation, and something of fear, and bowing low to the duke, they together took their departure.

The other councillors also departed one after another, De Horn and Egmont lingering until the last. The former had already reached the door accompanied by Don Fernando de Toledo, who seemed to be doing him honour by escorting him thus far, and Egmont was about to follow his steps, when the Duke of Alba recalled him; and as the count turned round, the haughty Spaniard sternly demanded his sword in the king's name.

"What means this, Sir Duke?" exclaimed Egmont, in angry surprise.

"That you are arrested at the king's pleasure," replied Alba, coldly, "which I suppose, my Lord of Egmont, you do not intend to dispute."

"By no means," replied the count, delivering his weapon. "In peace and in war my sword is ever at my sovereign's command; but I think my services—"

"It is for the king to remember them, my lord," said the duke, "and for me to execute his commands. You must prepare to depart instantly for Ghent, there to take your trial for high treason."

Horn was now brought back to the hall by Don Fernando, who had arrested him on the first step of the stairs; and the Duke of Alba, making a graceful obeisance, retired by the door at which he had entered. "It is a bold stroke," he muttered to himself, "and will strike terror throughout the land. Let them dare to resent it!"—he raised his clenched fist—"I wish they would venture so far, the lazy, beer-swilling rascals! my brave Spaniards would ask no better diversion."

Scarcely had the door closed upon him, when Egmont involuntarily murmured, "Oh! Orange, my true friend—my faithful Casembrot—my gentle Isabel—had I but believed you—even to-day, perchance—but no! I will stand upon my trial; the king will not, dare not, but more than all, he cannot have the heart to do so foul a deed! I will trust my noble master to the last."

"I," said De Horn-" I wish I had not trusted him so far."

CHAPTER LX.

BARLAIMONT and Mansfeldt passed silently through the Spanish soldiery that filled and surrounded the house of Cuylenburg. A heavy gloom hung upon their brows as they took their way towards the Palais de la Cour, which was not lessened even when they stood in the presence of the regent, of whom they claimed an immediate audience in the duke's name.

"You are the bearers of some urgent message—some strange intelligence," said the regent. "Pray, messires, explain. In what does the duke desire to consult with me?"

Mansfeldt's embarrassment increased, but Barliamont came to his relief.

" Madam," he said, " the Duke of Alba has not sent us to consult

with you, but to announce the accomplishment of a deed which he is desirous, as in duty bound, you should learn directly from himself, rather than by public rumour."

The duchess turned pale.

"He selected us to communicate with your highness," continued Barlaimont, "thinking that we were high in your confidence, and would

therefore prove acceptable messengers."

"In which I hope and trust he has not been mistaken," said Mansfeldt, with a courteous bow, "especially considering how faithfully we stood by your highness in critical times, when aid was so far off."

" Messires, I doubt not your fidelity; the messengers are certainly ac-

ceptable, but the message itself-pray let me have it."

"The counts of Egmont and Horn have but this moment been arrested at the duke's council, and are about to be thrown into prison, where they will remain until they stand upon their trial for high treason."

"Sancta Maria!" exclaimed the duchess, clasping her rosary with both hands, for a moment lost in astonishment. "And has the duke sufficient authority to do this?" she said, recovering her voice, though she strove in vain to re-assume her usual air of composure.

"Doubtless, madam," said Mansfeldt, "under the king's own hand

and seal."

"And why knew I nought of it?" said Margaret, hastily. "Methinks the Duke of Alba's first duty had been to show me his warrant for an act

of such extremity."

"And so he would, madam, as he bade me tell you," replied Mansfeldt, "but for the king's express command, that he should keep you as much aloof from this affair as possible, in order to preserve you from the odium which must inevitably be attached to such severe measures."

"Which the duke feels of course fully able to bear alone," said the duchess. "Nay, for that matter, he is proud of incurring the hatred of

the Flemings."

The two ministers sighed deeply.

"Have you anything further to tell me concerning this morning's proceedings? Nay, you need not consult each other by looks—it is a question of pure curiosity on my part—I know it concerns me not, and that it lies at your will to satisfy or not this feminine caprice of mine." The duchess spoke these words with bitterness.

"Nay, madam, grieved are we to perceive that you appreciate not better the motives of your royal brother," said Mansfeldt; but Barlaimont answered her question more directly, by communicating the further

arrests that had taken place.

"Stralen, the burgomaster of Antwerp?" she replied. "I under-

stand-the richest man in Flanders!"

"It is not for his wealth, gracious lady," said Mansfeldt, "but as the Prince of Orange's most trusty friend—the confidant of all his secrets—"

"And the Lord of Backerseel," interrupted the regent; "it is hoped, doubtless, that he, too, will betray his patron. But, messires, Alba will find himself mistaken in both these gentlemen. I know them well; they will prove true—true even unto death! However, I perfectly understand the duke's aim. Is not the house of Egmont called the rich?"

"Madam, the confiscation will fill the king's coffers," said Barlaimont, bluntly.

"Ill-judging ministers may have told him so," said the duchess; "such

as these will eventually go far to empty them.'

"Your highness was once as indignant against the Count of Egmont as ever the king can be," said Barlaimont, almost reproachfully. "This

change--'

"My lord, I was angry," replied the duchess. "And had I not just cause for anger? But now that, having resisted all evil counsels, he has returned to the path of duty, when—mind me, messires—had he left it altogether there are but few who would not have followed in his steps; now that he has shown his zeal so clearly, I let all idle resentment die away."

"Yet allow me to remind you, madam," said Mansfeldt, in a sad but firm tone, "that it was you who thought it necessary to implore the king for aid, when the Count of Egmont assured you—and indeed in that we all agreed with him—that there were enough true hearts in this country to shield your highness's person from harm, and to re-establish order.

You would not believe us, and now you lament."

"Do you fling these reproaches at me?" exclaimed the duchess, with vehemence. "Here I stood, with but a few faithful councillors to battle against a host of traitors, and that arch-hypocrite the Prince of Orange ready to turn the tide against me. In the midst of the coming tempest I felt myself indeed alone, and cried aloud for succour; but it was the means of war, not war that I desired; the presence of the king or of a subordinate general, not that of a substitute. But when I stand victorious over every difficulty, when I have defeated and punished the guilty, restored peace, and—what I pride myself upon, and value more than all the rest—re-established the only pure and true faith—when, I say, all this is achieved by the hand of an unassisted woman, then is it that an army of Spaniards, headed by a man who is odious in this country—proud, vindictive, remorseless—is sent to supersede me. Is this the price of my services, of my toils, of my cares?"

"Not to supersede, gracious lady, but to assist. He is but a co-

adjutor."

"Do not mock me with words like these, Mansfeldt. What does this coadjutor, as you please to term him? Scarcely is he arrived at the frontier when he sends me word that he will quarter his soldiers in this town; no other, forsooth, will suit his humour. I beg that Brussels may be spared, on account of its fidelity through all the struggle, in consideration of the respect due to my presence; a small boon, methinks, to grant an emperor's daughter, his sovereign's sister. But no; the Duke of Alba chooses to dwell here, and he must have troops quartered in the town. His credentials seem merely to show a military authority, yet the duke immediately proceeds to change governors and appoint commanders. He speaks of making new edicts, raising new fines; and this very day, without so much as consulting me, he takes upon himself to arrest the Grand Admiral of Holland and the hero of Flanders. Nay, he is master here—there is no denying it; and my services being no longer required, are most superfluous; nor would it be-

seem one of my rank and of my blood to rest satisfied with the simple title of regent, when its office and its dignity are gone. The Duke of Alba will very soon, for aught that I will interfere, be sole dictator in the Netherlands."

The councillors looked at each other in mute consternation.

"Surely your highness cannot seriously entertain the thought of leaving us?" said Mansfeldt. "Ah, madam! the good genius of Flanders will depart with you."

Barlaimont spoke not, but seemed still more deeply affected. A pause ensued, which was broken by Bertie, the secretary, appearing with a packet from Spain, which a private messenger from the king had that instant delivered.

The duchess broke the seals impatiently, and running her eye, hastily, over the contents of a not very long epistle, "This comes in time, messires," she said; "the king has met my wishes half-way. I shall make everything ready for immediate departure. Tell the Duke of Alba, gentlemen, in return for his message, that I do not suppose he would have dared to proceed to such lengths without due authority; it therefore does not be seem me to object to his proceedings, however repugnant they may be to my feelings. And further tell him, from me, to use his authority with discretion; he found this country at peace, let him take heed that he make it not the theatre of war. The Gueux are morally dead; but let not their dust be moved with too contemptuous a foot, lest like the Phænix they rise from their ashes more to be dreaded than ever. But no! it is useless to warn him. I foresee a long and a bloody civil war, to which, if one hair of his head be touched, the fall of the Count of Egmont will give the signal. My opinions on this matter I will myself offer to the king, and you may inform the Duke of Alba of my intention to exert myself to the uttermost in the count's behalf."

"And my poor kinsman, my brother-in-law, De Horn," urged Mansfeldt. "If your highness would but deign to entreat his majesty to be so gracious as to balance the few services I may have rendered against his demerits."

"I will not forget your request, Mansfeldt," said the princess.

"And when is it your pleasure that the States assemble to receive

your highness's adieux?" demanded Barlaimont.

"That pleasure is denied me," replied the duchess. "The king has expressly interdicted their being called together. From the hour when I leave this country, your councils must be held within Alba's palace; all your laws will henceforth emanate from him. I leave this, my native land, with regret," she added; "but you see, messires, it is time that I should go."

"Yes, madam!" said Barlaimont; "it is indeed time to preserve unsullied the glory which is so justly yours from the contamination of the errors, the crimes, perhaps, of this new administration. Better that you go now with a name unblemished, to return in better days—our keen

regrets will follow you -- our hopes will ever turn to you!"

"Thank you—thank you, Barlaimont," said the princess, much moved.

"Once before, in an hour of incertitude—nay, why disguise it—of fear, your voice urged me on, and phophesied the success that crowned my

efforts. To-day, in my hour of sorrow, it is again your voice that speaks comfort. I, also, will think of you, Barlaimont; and of you too, Count of Mansfeldt, with regret mingled with pleasure; nay, I shall regret every true heart in Flanders, and will trust that all those who have been false may turn to the truth. I will explain my feelings to the nation by means of a letter, since I may not speak them to the States—for to-day, gentlemen, leave me; I am moved—much moved, and would be alone. Nay," she added, with a kind smile, "if I thus send you from my presence, it is that I may not, in my weakness, utter what would ill beseem me to speak, and what you might regret to hear."

Scarcely had the councillors left her when the duchess hurried to her own chamber, and sinking into a chair, covered her face with her hands, and wept, more in mortification at the few false moves she had made—of which she now for the first time became aware—than even at their

results.

THE QUEEN'S LETTER.

AN EPISODE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

T.

The open struggle in 1789 between the royal authority and the sovereignty of the people became day by day more animated; and clear-sighted persons could already foresee the grave events which would mark the close of the eighteenth century. Inaugurated as it had been by the ascension of Louis XV. to the throne; disgusted at monarchy by the voluptuous proceedings of a dissolute king; deeply moved by the sarcastic writings of Voltaire, and the startling paradoxes of the philosophers of the "Encyclopedie," the century was fatally drawing to its close, and, obedient to the law which regulates the fall of bodies, redoubled its velocity in proportion as it approached the termination of its course.

For eight months the Legislative Assembly had assumed the place of the constituent one; and merely by a comparison of the two it was easy to appreciate the radical change which had taken place in the situation of affairs. The Constituent Assembly, solely occupied with general principles and questions, had neglected those details which, being more accessible to moderate talents, had also left more room for the passions. The Legislative Assembly, on the contrary, not being compelled to seek the basis of a constitution, employed its time in regulating trifling matters,

and annoying individuals.

At the date we are writing of, the Girondist party still possessed all its influence: it furnished ministers for Louis Seize, a president for the Assembly, and guided the nation. Still their preponderance was menaced with ruin, for it was already undermined. In the parliamentary tribune the Girondists possessed an undivided empire; but without the walls of the National Assembly there existed other tribunes, and these were occupied by men less eloquent and discreet than the Girondists, but who, through the very violence and bitterness of their language, better pleased

the already blase ears of the mob. The Jacobins' Club equalled in influence the Feuillans, of whom Lafayette was the leader, and their meetings were perhaps better attended than those of the National Assembly -that is to say, a third power had already interposed between the legislative and royal authority, which terrified and governed them both. This indefinable power, which we may term, if we will, the power of the street, also possessed its privileged orators, its government and militia. It was this power that directed the deliberations of the National Assembly, and imposed its own decrees, signed or destroyed the patents of patriotism, gave or withdrew popularity. The Girondists, on quitting the Legislative Assembly, stunned by the applause that had greeted them, asked with great disquietude, "What will they think at the Jacobins'?" Thus, by degrees, the revolution extended its circle, and descended from the elevation to which the metaphysics of Sievès and the eloquence of Mirabeau had raised it, to the humbler proportions of a partisan war, in which each wished to play his part, fire his musket, and kill his man. however, was perfectly logical: human sentiments do not long remain in a sphere of abstraction, and by becoming individualised, must necessarily

The position of the Girondists toward the crown was as follows: the Legislative Assembly had handed in two decrees, which Louis XVI. obstinately refused to sanction. The first of them withdrew the pension the Constituent Assembly had granted, from those priests who refused to take the oath, placed them under the surveillance of the departments, and condemned them to transportation, if they excited civil disturbances, either by their discourse, or even by their presence. Such measures were repugnant to Louis's timorous conscience. "I will not betray God to please the people," was his answer on each occasion that the ministers

pressed him to sanction the decree of the Assembly.

The second bill related to the formation of an army of 20,000 men, and was brought forward by Servan, the minister of war. Paris, they said, should and must be protected from invasion; but the king, whether right or wrong, could not be induced to regard the matter in the same light as his ministers. He fancied that these 20,000 men assembled in Paris were rather summoned to menace his throne than defend the city. He saw himself shut up in his palace, besieged by 20,000 bayonets, and, in short, deprived of the little liberty remaining after his flight to Varennes.

He, therefore, refused to sanction this decree, as well as the other, and the irritation of the Girondists—represented in the royal council by Servan, Claviére, and Roland—reached its highest pitch. They tried, in the first place, to shake the obstinacy of the king, and Roland, under the dictation of his wife, wrote a letter to Louis, which was read in full council. In this letter the king was almost cited to obey his ministers; the wisdom of the two decrees to which he refused his sanction was praised; he was told that in the absence of legal repression the irritated nation would know how to execute its own vengeance on disturbers; but a short delay, and the sorrowful people would regard the king as the friend and accomplice of the conspirators.

However this might be, the resolution of Louis XVI. was not shaken. Religion and royalty both appeared to him directly attacked by the two decrees of the Legislative Assembly. Clavière, Roland, and Servan could obtain nothing, and soon after learned that they had ceased to be ministers.

The Girondists, conquered by the energy or, as some would call it, the obstinacy of the king, then did what true statesmen should never have done: they appealed from the royal authority to the sovereignty of the people. The three disgraced ministers, far from complaining of their disgrace, were pleased with it. Madame Roland forwarded the Assembly a copy of the letter written to the king; it was read there openly, commented on, and applauded. After the ovation decreed by the parliament to their disgraced friends, the Girondists had nothing more to desire than a popular manifestation, which soon arrived. The people openly took the part of Roland, Claviére, and Servan, against the king; they were pitied, praised; and these three ministerial martyrs became three new deities, who instantly took their place in the shifting pantheon

which the people erected each morning to its idols of the day.

On the 19th June, 1792, at eight in the evening, the exaltation was at its height. Numerous assemblies had been formed in the Rue St. Honoré, and especially in the vicinity of the Jacobin Club, which held its meetings in the same convent where the Leaguers had formerly met. Each moment the crowd became more compact, and each group possessed its orator. The text of all the discourses was the same: the three sacrificed ministers were the subject, and the praises bestowed on them were accompanied by imprecations on Monsieur and Madame Veto. petition was spoken of to request the king to recal his ministers; the name of Dumouriez was anathematised, who had dared to remain in the ministry after the retreat of his colleagues; and the motion brought forward in the National Assembly was highly approved, which declared that the three disgraced ministers bore with them the regret and confidence of the nation. Some also abused Robespierre and the Jacobins, who did not share in the general irritation, and feared the results of a popular movement, organised for the benefit of a party opposed to their own.

The popularity of the Girondists had now received a more brilliant consecration: not being able to govern through the king, they intended to govern through the people, until the latter could govern without them. It would be difficult to say what were in reality the elements of this open-air club, which extended from the Rue de l'Echelle as far as the Rue Royale; but in this medley of ardent and distorted physiognomies, vigorous and naked arms, attentive ears striving to catch the mysterious words which frequently did not reach them, there was something menacing and at the same time grand. The earth seemed to tremble, as at the approach of a storm, and those vague rumours which circulated from door to door, from mouth to mouth, and through each link of the lengthening chain, resembled the noise of the hoarse rolling thunder, as it re-echoes from one mountain ridge to the other.

From time to time national guards in uniform, and armed, pressed through the crowd, and bent their course towards the Palais Royal. Protect the Palais Royal! Such was the sole pre-occupation of those people who most energetically desired order; in their eyes the Palais Royal was the palladium of society, the arx sacra which must be defended at any

cost; and order did not seem to them in any danger as long as this immense depôt of all the riches of the nation was protected from the invasion of the masses, and the violence of plunder. The national guards passed through the crowded ranks of the mob, with their heads lowered, without speaking to those who elbowed them, and almost without regarding them. For their part the agitators did not attempt to stop them, though perhaps one of those females, who were afterwards called "tricoteuses," might address a citizen soldier on his passage. The garde nationale, however, were wrong in fearing plunder, and the instinct of "shop" deceived them; at the commencement of great political commotions the people is ever disinterested; when the intention is to overthrow a throne, none think of the velvet that covers it; in a revolutionary season the very thieves fight, and do not steal.

Opposite the church of St. Roch, and in the centre of the street, a group of peculiar appearance was assembled; and this group, if not the most terrible, was at least the most talkative of all. It was composed exclusively of lads from twelve to fourteen years of age, the greater part locksmith apprentices, which could be seen by the leather aprons that encircled their waists, and the ferruginous hue which covered them from These sucking republicans all bore in the highest degree head to foot. the stamp of a type which has since become celebrated, and by merely reading the few lines we consecrate to them, the present generation of Parisian gamins might recognise their ancestors in the upturned nose, the sharp eye, the mouth continually open, and the ears ever on the alert. Rejoicing in the noise which took place around them, and presaging for the morrow a day of jollity, that is to say, of disturbance, they moved about joyously, like fish in muddy water, and inhaled the electric air which surrounded them. Imitators, like the apes, they did all they saw the men do, and repeated all they heard them say. It was worth while seeing them each time that a new arriver approached their circle, and asking him simultaneously with a frenzied ardour,

"Have you got any news?"

And when the arriver told them some of those rumours which never fail to traverse a crowd,

"Famous, famous!" they repeated, as they rubbed their hands, "there will be a row."

"The patriots of the Faubourg St. Antoine," one remarked, "are coming with cannon and drummers at their head. That will be a famous sight."

"Yes," said another, "they are going to pay a visit of ceremony to M.

Veto."

"And quite right, too," a third remarked; "is not the French people its own master? It loves its ministers, why cannot it keep them?"

The boy who gave vent to this reflection was accounted the sharpest politician in the whole section of gamins. His name was Panotet; he was an orphan, and apprenticed to a locksmith in the Rue des Boucheries. Naturally idle and disobedient, the neighbourhood of the Jacobins' Club had completed his ruin. Whenever his master sent him on an errand, he never omitted visiting the discussion-room. The tricoteuses eventually formed his acquaintance, and made room for him among them. He would often spend whole hours in listening to the orators who succeeded one

another at the tribune, and take a sufficiently active part in the boisterous demonstrations which usually followed each discourse. When the infected language of a Moderate excited the wrath of the assembly, Panotet's shrill voice exceeded all the others; but at the same time, when the enthusiasm of the auditors had been sufficiently inflamed by the eloquence of the more ardent demagogues, it was Panotet who took the lead in applauding and shouting. On the days that M. de Robespierre spoke, Panotet never returned home to his master's before night, which cost him sometimes reproaches, and more frequently a thrashing. With his indomitable idleness and careless nature, Panotet then was the most perfect specimen of the revolutionary gamin. He detested the aristocrats, because in his eyes the aristos were all master locksmiths. Au reste, disinterested as a Cincinnatus, he would have hung a man, especially a master blacksmith, to a lantern, but take a halfpenny from his purse-never! By doing so, Panotet would have believed he was sullying his political character.

At the moment when the Gamin's Club in the Rue St. Honoré was most fully attended, eight o'clock sounded from the church of St. Roch. This was the hour at which the apprentices supped. Thus, spite of the patriotic sentiments which animated them, the echo of the official clock produced an instantaneous diversion; at the last stroke the apprentices tucked up their aprons and hurried away. Panotet alone remained. His little face seemed to express a sudden resolution, and when one of his

comrades said to him as he passed:

"Your master will thrash you, if you don't go home."
"My master thrash me!" he cried, driving his cap down over his eyes "Never-my master will never thrash me with a blow of his fist. again. Let him keep his nonsense and cuffs for some one else-I am no longer his apprentice. I send in my resignation. Masters are rogues and monsters! they think they've only to stretch their hand out to be always in the right. But no, gentlemen, a hundred times no; Panotet tells you. Go and hear M. Robespierre at the Jacobins', you ignorant fellows; he will teach you 'that one man is equal to another; in a proper community, no one is master, and no one a slave, and that all God's creatures have a right to the same social advantages.' And all my share of these social advantages, up to the present time, has been blows and kicks-many thanks for the privilege. But I've had enough. Only yesterday, my master repeated to me for the hundredth time, 'You wretched boy, if I were to turn you out, what would become of you? You have no mother, no father, no home—you would die of hunger.' Nonsense! go to bed. Can a man die of hunger? is not the French nation his mother? The nation will nourish me—it is its duty. In return, when those Prussian rogues come on the frontier, I will shoulder a musket, and get myself killed; in that way I and the nation will cry quits."

Here Panotet, drunk with enthusiasm, seized his cap with both hands,

and threw it in the air, crying,

"Long live liberty! long live the nation! hurra for M. Robespierre and the Jacobins! long live the tricoteuses, and down with the master blacksmiths! Oh, he, Houp!"

When Panotet had thus given vent with the full force of his lungs to what he comically termed his opinions, he commenced running from group to group, whispering a word to one and the other, standing at one moment on tip-toe to hear better, and then sinking to the ground, and crawling between the legs of the men, like a terrier hunting among the Carried away by an irresistible desire for excitement, he forgot that not a morsel of food had passed his lips since mid-day, and that he had no other roof to cover him but the sky, which began to grow dark above his head. Insensible of privation, careless of the future, a true town sparrow on a day of distubance, he only waited a signal or noise to rush in some direction or the other. He had already traversed some twenty times the space comprised between the Gallery Delorme and the Palais Royal, when he saw, at the corner of the Rue de l'Echelle, a fiacre struggling with great difficulty to gain a passage. Although the two horses that drew it used their utmost exertions, although the coachman from his box cracked his whip repeatedly, and uttered innumerable "gares!" the crowd showed no hurry in opening a passage, and each step the unfortunate carriage gained, it had to attack afresh the chain which, though broken twenty times, ever became re-connected. an incident was a veritable godsend to Panotet. In a moment, partly running, partly climbing, dodging the elbows, and scraping past the legs, he reached the corner of the Rue de l'Echelle. When he arrived there, he made renewed struggles with his hands and feet, and at last succeeded in reaching the middle of the street in front of the horses, which, as they could not advance, had commenced stamping. He then planted himself firmly on his legs, and looking up to the coachman, whose whip still continued to beat the air, he cried, in his shrill voice,

"Oh, hi! when the people deliberates in the streets, carriages have no

right to pass-that is my opinion."

Either the coachman did not hear this declaration of principles, or else did not fancy himself bound to obey the orders of a scamp of fourteen years of age, for he let his whip fall once again on the back of the horses. As quick as lightning Panotet seized the handle, and held it tightly.

" Let go," said the coachman.

" Not such a fool," Panotet replied.

The coachman made a violent movement, and lifted Panotet off his legs, who had not left hold of the whip, and who, while balanced in the air, began singing:

Dansons la Carmagnole,
Vive le Son,
Vive le Son.
Dansons la Carmagnole,
Vive le Son,
Du Canon.

This singular spectacle brought all the laughers to Panotet's help. On all sides the applause of the spectators was heard, and some men cried out to the coachman,

"Let the boy alone, you rascal! he is in the right—carriages cannot

pass.

The coachman this time obeyed. He let go the whip, and Panotet fell on his feet. The shutters of the fiacre had remained hermetically closed, and such a precaution, at such a moment, indicated a determination for mystery. With one bound the gamin rested his foot on one of the

wheels, caught hold of the handle, and when his head was level with the top of the shutter he lowered the latter suddenly, and passed his head into the opening.

"Hola!" he cried, as he turned towards the spectators who shared his curiosity, "there's a woman inside, and she must be an aristocrat, her

hands are so white."

II.

AT the sight of Panotet's grimacing face, a young female, who alone occupied the interior of the fiacre, hurriedly drew back. Her hands fully justified Panotet's observation, not merely through their whiteness, but also through the delicacy of their form, and the filbert shape of their rosy nails. The costume of the Unknown, however, had nothing peculiarly aristocratic about it. It consisted in the first place of one of those caps which would give our grandmothers (we beg their pardon) a somewhat flyaway appearance. It appeared hardly fastened on the back of her head, and the lace which surrounded it blew about with so much laisser aller, that it would have been dangerous to cross the bridges in such a cap. A net handkerchief did not protect the shoulders much more than This handkerchief was very justly called a the cap did the head. "menteur," in the first place, because, though having the air of being imagined for defence, it was rather adapted to encourage an attack; and, secondly, because the artificial swelling might serve to conceal the absence of certain beauties, which Rousseau's books had brought more than ever into fashion. The dress was of simple taffeta, without any ornament: it was cut short in the waist, and rose a little above the hips, by means of those puffings which had been substituted for the "paniers" of Louis Quinze. The hem of this dress fell on a pair of black-buckled slippers, with moderately high heels. This costume, we may fancy, did not much resemble that of a woman of high rank, but rather appeared to reveal the grisette in her Sunday clothes, or the little bourgeoise, who does not dare to ape too closely the lady of quality.

However just or not these descriptive observations may be, Panotet's remark had produced its customary effect on the crowd. The endemic hatred of the people against the aristos had reached, some time before, a degree of menacing exaggeration: thus, under the generic name of aristocrats, the people understood every advantage, even that of beauty—every superiority, were it only that of a white hand over a black one. In this latter respect, the Unknown, who found herself besieged in a fiacre by a turbulent mob, justified the suspicion and resentment of those who

surrounded her.

Panotet had scarce uttered his malevolent remark, when, on all sides, voices were heard exclaiming:

"Make her come out; we'll have a look at her."

Such an injunction was too much to Panotet's taste for him to hesitate obeying it. In an instant he had opened the door, let down the step, and offering his arm with a mocking sneer,

"Madame," he said to the Unknown, "will you do me the honour of

accepting my arm?"

The Unknown shuddered at hearing this invitation, and with an invol. XXIII.

stinctive and, doubtless, unreflecting movement, tried to draw further

back, although she was already close to the side of the coach.

"Come, madame," Panotet continued, "behave with a good grace. You have heard the command of the French nation, and it must be obeyed. Besides, consider; if you do not accept my hand you will be forced to take some one else's, and you'll certainly lose by the exchange, for a man's hand is harder than a boy's."

Although Panotet's appearance was not enough to intimidate the Unknown, still above his head, and through the half-open door, she could see several really terrible faces. She was compelled to obey. Without taking the black paw Panotet offered her, she stepped out, and found herself alone, trembling and desolate, in the midst of the mob. Her first movement was to hide her blushing face with her hands.

"Down with your hands," Panotet was the first to cry, for he had a hearty wish to continue through the whole of the affair the part of

Coryphæus he had assumed at the commencement.

"Down with the hands," twenty rough voices repeated.

"Come, my little woman," said a tricoteuse, who had been attracted by the disturbance; "the sun won't spoil your complexion, I hope, and

we shan't eat you-we've all had our supper."

The sorry jest which terminated this address was received with an universal hurrah of approval, and the cries of "Down with the hands," recommenced with increased vigour. As the Unknown, however, did not yet appear disposed to obey, a man approached her, and, raising his rough hand, touched the tender skin of the supposed aristocrat. The Unknown drew back, not through terror, but with an air of suffering modesty, and

then, lowering both her hands, stood immovable.

Like a master of a mansion who makes a point of doing the honours of his picture gallery or cabinet of curiosities, Panotet stood bolt upright by the side of the Unknown, and his monkey eye seemed to say to the spectators of the scene: "Examine carefully the woman I present to you-I permit you to do it—I authorise you—but do not forget that I show her to you." Fully occupied with these swelling thoughts, the gamin of the Rue St. Honoré was perhaps the only one who had not noticed the truly remarkable beauty of her whose proprietor he constituted himself. The Unknown was, at the most, five-and-twenty years of age, and on looking at her features no one would have deemed her more than eighteen. She was one of those fair young girls, bearing the stamp of melancholy and grace, whom André Chenier was dreaming of at this very moment, and whom he has celebrated in such harmonious verse. Her hair was of an exquisite auburn colour, and tied in a knot on the top of her head, revealed a fair, smooth forehead; her eyes of tender blue, encased in eyebrows of irreproachable form, appeared habitually to wear the expression of vague astonishment and restlessness, which characterises the transition from infancy to maidenhood.

Were it not for the exquisite and fully developed bust, which proved the maturity of her charms, a poet might have compared her to one of those graceful bucolic beings whom we know by the names of Amaryllis and Galatea, but whom Virgil doubtlessly in his heart called by another

name.

The circle which had formed round the young woman became gra-

dually denser; burning eyes sought her eyes; daring hands clutched her dress; with admirable and instinctive modesty she crossed her hands over her chest, and murmured, in a trembling voice,

"What do you want—what have I done? Cannot I proceed—cannot a woman go through Paris without incurring the risk of being in-

sulted ?"

"We don't wish to do you any harm, my dear," said Panotet; "we only want to know where you come from, and where you are going—answer?"

At this question a deep blush covered the young woman's cheeks.

"Where I am going to," she hesitatingly said; "have I not the right

of going where I please?"

"No!" replied Panotet, "you have no right to ride in a carriage among us, at the risk of crushing poor folks. No! you have no right to be silent when I cross-question you in the name of the people. That is my opinion—only an aristocrat could act as you have done, and answer me in the way you did. Isn't it so—you others?" he added, looking with imperturbable assurance at those who surrounded him.

"Yes, that's true-Panotet's right," several voices cried.

"Compel her to tell who she is, and where she's going to?" others

added, addressing Panotet directly.

Still the opinions were divided in the crowd; some, animated with a blind and lasting fury against all which was in any way connected with aristocracy, considered, like Panotet, that a woman who had white hands fully deserved all these insults; but others, and these the greater portion, did not wish that, at the instigation of a gamin, a rascally claqueur of the Jacobins' Club, a young woman should be prevented continuing her road, and advantage taken of her embarrassment and weakness to inflict on her publicly the punishment of the question. These persons insinuated that the Unknown had not said or done anything which could attract the suspicions of the people; that the simplicity of her dress indicated a bourgeoise, and not a lady of quality; and those who insulted her ran the risk of outraging the feelings of the wife or daughter of a patriot.

These remarks circulated through the crowd, and probably the sense of justice and reason would have eventually gained the victory over the spirit of headlong and blind animosity, but the same tricoteuse who had already spoken, suddenly gave a new impulse to the mob, by whispering one of those ideas which are no sooner heard than accepted. She had drawn close to the Unknown, and with that hateful curiosity which almost always animates an old woman in the presence of a young and handsome one, had examined her dress, her features, and her form, from head to foot. At the end of this examination she placed herself in front of the Unknown, with her leg stretched out boldly before her, and holding delicately between her thumb and forefinger the calico petticoat which, with a shabby jacket of the same stuff, composed her whole attire, she began singing, with an evident intention of raillery, and twirling her

petticoat from left to right:

Ma commère, quand je danse, Mon cotillon va-t-il bien? Il va de ci, il va de là. This pantomime was like the first scrape of the bow that announces the commencement of the ball—in imitation of the tricoteuse, all began twirling about, and joined hands.

A voice cried, "Dance the Carmagnole!" and a hundred other voices

repeated it.

Panotet, we may easily imagine, was not the last to set himself in motion, and seizing the hand of the Unknown, he cried,

"A dance, my pet; and mind you put some activity into it, or I shall

certainly fancy you are an aristocrat."

The chain was then formed, and the round commenced. The Unknown felt her limbs yield, and her eyes grow dim, but her hands were no longer free, and she was carried round in the wild dance. As was the fashion in the Greek tragedies, a man with a sonorous voice chanted each couplet. While he was singing the round was stopped, and then re-commenced, all the dancers singing the burthen in chorus.

The Coryphæus sang:

Madame Veto avait promis, Madame Veto avait promis, De faire egorger tout Paris. Mais le coup a manqué Grâce à nos canonniers.

This couplet produced a greater impression on the Unknown than the others had done: pale with terror, and her eyes half closed, she sought to disengage her hands from the nervous grasp that held them; but at the moment she felt herself dragged round, and the chorus repeated:

Dansons la Carmagnole,
Vive le son,
Vive le son.
Dansons la Carmagnole,
Vive le son,
Du canon!

During the ensuing halt the young woman, spite of her weakness, looked around her, as if to meet some friendly countenance, or to invoke some saviour.

Among the spectators who contented themselves with witnessing the scene we are describing, without desiring or deigning to take part in it, there were two whose attitude and appearance deserve to be equally remarked, though for different reasons. The first was a young man of twenty-four to twenty-six years of age, who wore the dress of a workman, and held under his arm a plane which he had probably been using during the day. Spite of the simplicity of his dress, this young man wore an expression of energy and goodness which heightened the native beauty of his features. Beneath his coarse waistcoat his chest, which was open to the breeze, like that of a man sensible of his dignity, appeared to heave and fall freely, and his slightly dilated nostrils, his black and brilliant eyes, his lofty and wide forehead, did not in any way give the lie to his air of resoluteness and passive strength.

If the young female united in herself all the delicacy, all the grace, and all the melancholy of a woman, we might say that the young man in question offered in his person an almost perfect model of manly proportion. His muscular arm was one of those on which a weak creature willingly

rests; his small and well-chiselled mouth seemed unadapted to offer a passage for equivoques or malicious insinuations. If his head had been covered with a three-cornered hat, his shoulders with a blue coat with standing collar—if a sabre had been fastened to his side, and a musket placed in his hands, this young man would have certainly realised the idea of a hero beneath the garb of a Garde-Française; with his open waist-coat and plane beneath his arm, he realised the idea of an independent and bold artisan who, on leaving the workshop, recognises no master.

It was on this young man that the Unknown first fixed her look, with an expression of weakness and anticipated gratitude which challenged his interposition. But whether the workman had not understood this appeal to his generosity, or that he cared little to interpose in favour of a woman whom he did not know, and who, besides, did not appear to him in serious danger, he remained immovable, and continued to contemplate the ensemble of the scene he had before him without troubling himself

with the details.

The second person of whom we have spoken was a man of about forty years of age. His dress was composed of a low-crowned hat with large flaps, a coat of a brown colour, cut in that angular form Robespierre loved; black kerseymere breeches, fastened below the knee by steel buckles; a white cravat, a silk waistcoat, worsted stockings, and shoes fastened with buckles like those on the garters. Thus dressed, this person represented very fairly that class of men whom the people of that day classed under the generic title of hommes de plume—that is to say, he might be taken either for a lawyer, or for the intendant of a great house, or, lastly, for one of those mongrels-the bastard offspring of decrepid communities-men of business. The problematic personage to whom we invite the attention of the reader, had doubtlessly some private reasons for not wishing to be seen, for from time to time he lowered the flaps of his hat over his eyes to hide the upper portion of his face, while the collar of his coat, which reached to his ears, nearly concealed the lower part. All that could be distinguished was a nose, evidently swollen by the frequent use of snuff, a large mouth, inflamed red lips, and flaccid cheeks which hung over his cravat. The individual in question thrust his head occasionally above a certain number of shoulders which served as a screen, and seemed to find pleasure in seeing the dancers floating before him. His look could have been seen to be constantly fixed with a malignant joy on the young woman who, at this moment, was being made the plaything of the caprice of the mob.

After having made an useless appeal to the pity of the young workman, the eye of the Unknown, compelled to continue its despairing search, fell on the features of this second personage; but instead of remaining fixed upon them, it turned from them with a species of horror. The Unknown was evidently under the impulse of a new emotion; she disengaged herself suddenly from the persons who held her, broke through the chain of which she had so reluctantly formed a link, slipped through the mass of elbows which separated her from the young carpenter, passed her arm beneath his, and resting upon it with an ardour that rendered the trembling which agitated her whole body excusable, said, in a low voice, but with a sharp and decisive tone, which gave her words the

energy of despair, "Sir, in the name of Heaven, save me!"

The chain of dancers, broken by this incident, could not be formed again Panotet had rushed in pursuit of the Unknown, and immediately. reached the side of the workman at the moment she was claiming his protection. At the sight of the improvised defender she had obtained, Panotet, whose mouth was already open to utter threats, retreated a little, in spite of his impudence, and assuming, though against the grain, the submissive tone of a mongrel which finds itself suddenly in the presence of a mastiff.

"Ah, it's you, Emile?" he said to the workman. "Do you know madame?" he added, after a pause, which revealed his annoyance, and nodding towards the Unknown, who seemed to hang on the arm of her

There was a moment of silence, during which the young woman only heard the beating of her own heart. If this man, in whose generosity she had trusted, were to repel her-if she were to find herself once more abandoned! Panotet was no longer alone; men had followed him, and had grouped themselves around him, all in readiness to support him. Panotet, therefore, was no longer the gamin whom a box of the ears could keep silent: he had assumed his position as chief of a faction: his army was at his heels. The carpenter probably understood the rapid change which had taken place in Panotet's position towards the Unknown and himself, for before answering the question asked him, he hesitated some time, glanced at the Unknown, and then replied in a clear voice, though not without emotion,
"Yes. I know madame. You scamp, have I not the right to offer my

arm to a person I am acquainted with?"

In spite of his improvising faculty, Panotet could not immediately find an answer. He knew the workman to be an excellent patriot, and a fervent disciple of the Jacobins' Club; and although he felt a strong desire to call his veracity in question, he did not dare do so. The latter, whom we shall call for the future Emile, profited by the moment of tranquillity Panotet's embarrassment allowed him, to whisper in the ear of the Unknown, "Come, madame, we have no time to lose;" and he dragged his companion along as fast as her feebleness allowed him.

Panotet watched them depart at first without any idea of following them, but his presence of mind soon returned with his anger. Furious at a dénouement which resembled a mystification, he rushed on the traces of the fugitives, followed by the men who surrounded him, and vociferating with his shrill voice insinuations against disguised aristocrats and false patriots. These insinuations, repeated by Panotet's supporters like so

many docile echoes, reached the ears of the Unknown. She pressed the arm of her guide, and murmured, "Here they come. Oh, my God!" "Be calm," the workman remarked; "men are like dogs; they follow you, and bite your heels when you fly from them, but stop when a man

turns and looks them in the face." And he then halted, turned toward Panotet and his band, and crossed his arms with a calm and resolute air.

The vociferations ceased immediately, and Panotet's myrmidons stopped, in imitation of their leader.

"Now we can proceed," the workman said; "in all probability they will not follow us."

CHANGE.

BY MARGARET CASSON.

CHAPTER VI.

"I prithee, Grumio, tell me how goes the world?"—"A cold world, Grumio, in every office but thine; and therefore fire: do thy duty, and have thy duty, for my master and mistress are almost frozen to death."

Or all the tedious hours which society dooms us, her slaves, to pass, surely the time spent by a large party waiting for the announcement of dinner, is, to the superlative degree, above all other tediousnesses. In the country especially, when this happiness is often prolonged to a pitch of dismal excitement, by the non-arrival of some distant laggard guest, if this be so, woe betide the unfortunate one whose fault it is that the delay has arisen, oh the pleasant sensation it gives you, as you enter a room, for your ears to be greeted with the sound, preceding your entrance, of "Dinner directly," uttered in a voice of whose decision there is no mistake, and followed by the almost immediate notification of the desired blessing being there, and then to feel how the assembled guests have been pouring forth the vials of their wrath upon your devoted head in your absence. No; you may play those tricks with time in a laisser aller London circle, but in the country, be it with high or low, it will hardly do to trifle thus at such an hour.

Something of the kind must surely be to-night at Arlingford Hall, for even the stately upright lady of the mansion is getting slightly restless now; and as to his lordship, there has been little doubt but that for some time past his mind has been ill at ease, his manners have by no means at this present time "that repose which marks the caste of Vere de Vere;" his eye discourses with unwonted interest the view from the window, commanding the approach to his noble hall, and, as a general thing, Lord Arlingford's partiality for scenery is in no ways remarkable.

"There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves, you must translate; 'tis fit we understand them."

Be it known, then, that Lord Arlingford is a very particular, punctual gentleman; and, moreover, Lord Arlingford has no objection to the artistic productions in the gastropomic line of a certain chef de cuisine—Monsieur de Rôtelan by name—who does him the honour to superintend such matters at Arlingford Hall, and he is sadly calculating the probability of even his skill being insufficient to save from harm the savoury meats such as his soul loveth, and it is already past the usual hour. But where are the missing guests? and echo answers, where! The assembled company, dispersed about the room, are whiling away the time as best they may; and amongst them may be found some old friends whom we know, and some new ones, too, are there, whose acquaintance we must make; and whilst Lord Arlingford meditates upon his cook, we will meditate on them.

Mr. Stanley is there, standing after the appropriate fashion of English country gentlemen, in the very centre of the hearth, not that any fire is burning there, but that makes not the slightest difference; there is some strange privilege attached to the position, and unknown to the uninitiated,

which makes it right for them there to take up their place; and most tenaciously do they hold it, some dim tradition of their youth, a remembrance how at school they had to win by force of arms the desired location, and so they ostentatiously keep it now, and are useful to their kind as screens, and so forth, on cold winter days. Well, there stood Mr. Stanley, grand and majestic in his state of mind, feeling at the moment profound contempt for the degeneracy of his kind, exemplified, in the present instance, in the person of Mr. Dennis Conway, his host's second son, a promising youth of the genus man termed "Fast," and whose great delight was bullying and horrifying (and this he was doing to his heart's content just now) "Old Diogenes," as he ever most irreverently termed Richard Stanley, maintaining he was far too good for this wicked world—that such a valuable piece of Rococo must be very rare, and should be cherished as a thing apart accordingly; and vowing he must be the original inhabiter of the tub, as nowhere else could he have obtained so limited an idea and view of human nature—the organ of veneration (particularly as regards his elders) not being the one the most developed on the head of the Hon. Dennis, I much fear; -and at a little distance from him stands his elder brother, Lord Ravenscroft, an old young man, grave and solemn to look upon, quite as valuable in his way to the curious as Mr. Stanley, with a cynical expression of countenance, and possessing a hard, dry, unimaginative talent. And talking earnestly to Eleanor is even yet another young man-a young man of age indescribable, he may be twenty, he may be forty; he is a link between every species of young man, he pleases the fast, and he pleases the slow, he mocks and he moralises, he laughs and he laments, he can talk sense as well as nonsense, and nonsense as well as sense, and yet he does all in an abstract, un-joining manner, and hold shis own; no one rightly comprehends him, and he hardly comprehends himself; he began life very young, and he feels very old now; he is seen everywhere, and known by every one; he had when young some real bitter sorrows to endure, and they sank deep into his heart, and crushed his energy, and he rose not as many do from their ashes; he was made for nobler aims than he has followed; he is a finished man of the world now, had he pursued his true vocation he would have been a man in the world (an ambition, let me remark en passant, it is a pity more do not strive to realise). never wore his sorrows on his sleeve for public comment; and in the world, people name "that happy fellow Robert Ashton," and half envy him as they mourn over their own small cares, for he, they say, never knew what it was to have a care, and he joins and laughs with them at himself, for he has no need of worldly pity or worldly sympathy; he values it at what it is, but warm deep feelings does he cherish within his heart of And there are others scattered about the room upon whom we need not comment—every-day guests with every-day characters, all cast in the same mould, with some few trifling variations, some small individualities, alone to distinguish them apart. Matter-of-fact menand women, pretty and ugly, gossiping and silent, which all may see everywhere. And Eleanor, who, after her usual fashion, has come down amongst them late, stands forth amid these ladies a noble woman from the rest; leaning back in her chair, she is talking to Mr. Ashton, having turned wearily away from Lord Ravenscroft's devoted, weighty

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prose; and Lord Ravenscroft is consoling himself for her neglect with the agrémens of a heavy conversation addressed to him by an elderly practical old-fashioned gentleman, a neighbour of his, who farms, and who is violent against Free-trade, and all modern measures, to all of which Lord Ravenscroft listens with "volto sciolto e pensieri stretti," and with the profound deference which only Lord Ravenscroft can give to a subject which the whole time is boring him intensely; and Eleanor looks relieved, and listens to Mr. Ashton's stricture and remarks on all around; and they are talking well together, as only cultivated refined minds can talk; and they liked, moreover, talking to each other, for their ideas suited; he found in her an elevated mind, and she in him one who did not condemn as folly every romantic uncommon idea in which she believed, which is apt to be the case in this prosaic age, when all ideas not reducible, à priori, are cried down as little short of an insane turn of character; and besides, they both knew they would neither of them ever fancy that the other was in love, or likely to fall in love each with each; another comfort just now, when people are always dreaming such must be the result of a friendship between woman and man, and also when half mankind deem if a woman likes talking to the other sex, she is infallibly laying men-traps and steel-guns to entrap the unwary. Oh! foolish, foolish age! when all with untrimmed lamps believe themselves to be the wise, and who can show where lies, or in what consists, the boasted wisdom - problem ex absurdo! There has a change fallen upon Eleanor since we beheld her last; she is graver, she is more womanly now, she has more savoir faire and savoir dire than she had then; but she has lost her happy childlike air; life is hardly so fresh now as then, but she is very lovely too, and her expressive face a beauteous thing to gaze on; for Eleanor is no marble statue now, but a speaking, breathing, soul-like bright imagining. The change is indescribable; there is a want of the gaieté de cœur which once distinguished her, there is an insouciance for all around, and in whatever she is doing now (certainly our Gallic neighbours are happier than we in their power of expressing the nicer modifications of feeling, for I can find no English words to express so well my meaning). Time is speeding on, and even Lady Arlingford at length suggests, with the usual dignified, condescending bend of her head which always accompanies her speech, as much as to say, "I have said!" that dinner had better be ordered; it is hardly, she thinks, necessary to wait any longer for the missing ones. And the order is given at last, and Eleanor asks her companion who it is that causes this delay and agita-He does not know; but Lady Arlingford tells her:

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"Dr. Markham, and a nephew he has asked to bring with him."
"Very odd on the part of Dr. Markham." Lord Arlingford observe

"Very odd on the part of Dr. Markham," Lord Arlingford observes,

"being so late," and wonders what can be the cause.

Lord Arlingford is a little man, in appearance very like a small stewed owl, and he looks around him with an air of injured virtue and offended dignity at the idea of Dr. Markham being late for dinner at Arlingford Hall. Mr. Stanley suggests the possibility that the worthy doctor, deep in his favourite tomes, forgot the time, and begs to know what nephew is accompanying him. Lord Arlingford, of course, "forgets;" but Dennis Conway says it is a great friend of his, and a very good fellow, indeed, too; and that they had been at college together, and his name is Dugald

Annesley; and then some drawn-out, meek conversation follows about Morley, and Mr. Annesley, and Dr. Markham; and Eleanor sits trembling with agitation, talking spasmodically to Mr. Ashton; and dinner is announced, and at that very moment the missing guests arrive, and whilst Dugald is delayed in approaching to her by his uncle's long prosy speech of introduction of his nephew, and apologies for his lateness, he has the satisfaction of seeing Eleanor sweep by him leaning on Mr. Ashton's arm; his first beholding her after two long years of absence; his first greeting the bow with which, as she passes, she acknowledges his presence!

Mechanically Dugald offered his arm to the lady his hostess designated to be his companion-mechanically did he follow in his turn with the rest-like one in a dream did he feel he was addressing her, and wondering whether he was talking sense or its reverse. He could not see how Eleanor was feeling; seated at the same side of the table as himself, but far away, between Mr. Ashton and Lord Ravenscroft, he could not watch her countenance, or judge whether she, too, was unchanged. And this, then, was their meeting; this the moment for which he had pined, and longed, and imaged to himself. How often had fancy's influence pictured to his view the joyful feelings of that hour! How often, when resting from his toil (for her endured), had thought, wandering unrestrained, with inventive witchery, clothing it in light, visioned the moment in many a varied, shadowy-reflected poesy, unreal, yet seeming true. And now-how other was the actual? Oh, false prophet for the future! -oh, failing hope on whom to centre a belief!-oh, worse than vain, thou warning of the past-experience! When will mortal learn how baseless of existence—how improbable the realisation—what phantoms of the mind, are all the dreams which a loving heart can frame. But love !- bright emanation of another sphere!—true love—best gift of Heaven to man—will ne'er be fettered by the earth-chain of humanity with the glory from on high flung around it; until, in its erratic course, the infallible and celestial one, in rough contact, meets the worldly practical externality of life, in its native heaven will it dwell; nay, even then, when in the rude encounter dashing and jarring with the clay-cold and the failing, the musical and divine harmony of its soul exists no longer, still will it cling, trusting on to the old belief, in its childlike faith, still live, on the outskirts of the sublime, midway between exaltation and humanity. "And the old and the grave look on; but (man) must taste for himself, or he will not give ear to their wisdom;" and time and sorrow, trial and confidence deceived, undermining faith and love, at length teach how opposed in these days is nature unto life; and instead of life, as we once knew life to be, we see but its reflection, we live but in its ghostlike shade. Oh! that the awakening, painful though the dispelling of such visions must ever be, would prove to men but a stimulus for nobler deeds, and mightier endeavours!-would that, preserved complete and powerful, the genuine enthusiasm might still exist, employed in higher struggles yet; in lofty utterance and immortal achievings, rather than, weary and dispirited with our lot, we should thrust away our precious spirit-gift entirely, and in so doing lower our place in the scale of creation, forget the high calling allotted to us as men; our nature lessened, descended, deadened, "the ruined shell of hollow towers."

The dinner went on, and Dugald's mind was growing calmer. After

all, what could Eleanor have done more? She could not at such a moment have greeted him more warmly. Still, that bow—it was sadly cold, he could not but admit. Oh, that too might be his fancy! And, after all, it was only his own fault lingering so long beneath the hawthorns; for, truth to tell, in his sentimental walk lay the sole cause of all the anxiety and delay; and, moreover, there was in his disposition an elasticity which would never let him long despair; an imaginative tendency, too expansive to be limited by the narrow boundaries of commonplace; and so Dugald revived a little, and was astonished at the end of all to find how much pleasanter a time he had passed than he certainly had anticipated to be possible.

CHAPTER VII.

This life we would retrieve
Is a faithful thing apart,
Which we love in, heart to heart,
Until one heart fitteth twain.
"Wilt thou be one with me?"
"I will be one with thee!"
"Ha, ha! we love and live!"
Alas, ye love and die!
Shriek—Who shall reply?
For is it not loved in vain?

I CANNOT tell you my astonishment the following morning when my servant came to tell me, long before my usual breakfast hour, that Mr. Annesley was below, and most anxious to see me. Knowing my habits as Dugald did, I felt strangely puzzled as to the cause of his so unusually early visit, for I am one who entirely agree in all Charles Lamb's theory on the horrors of early rising—truly a popular fallacy, in its advantage and delight, to rise with the lark and go to bed with the lamb! I certainly have no fancy to take for my models such low standards of example! Besides, it was pouring with rain—a morning suggestive of the flood a sort of day where there was no comfort to be met with abroad or at home; however, having a strong regard for Mr. Annesley, I was ready to sacrifice at his shrine even the pleasure of my morning's slumber, and on such a day too! and I hastened to prepare for his rencounter, muttering and grumbling all the time I was doing what was so very foreign to my nature, namely, hurrying over my toilette; but, alas! alas! when so engaged I am never very rapid, and I fear, spite of all my well-meant endeavours, poor Dugald's patience was well-nigh exhausted ere I entered the room where he was awaiting me. I found him traversing my small apartment with rapid steps, evidently anxious and perturbed.

"My dear Dugald," I exclaimed, "what can have happened? rousing an unfortunate individual from his bed at this unearthly hour. Have you committed murder, or a highway robbery, that your conscience will not let you sleep?—mine being at rest within my breast, I can scarce appreciate the compliment you have paid me!"

Most grim was the look my friend bestowed upon me after this ex-

ordium; I really trembled for the fate of the cream upon my breakfast-table; and he only began his peripatetic propensity more violently than ever.

"If I might suggest," I remarked, very humbly at last, "a little repose—my carpet, too, is rather old—and I myself subject to the head-ache—"

"Mr. —," said he, at last, abruptly stopping in his walk, "you will drive me quite frantic, downright mad, if you go on in this way. For God's sake have a care, for I am nearly so now."

I was grave in an instant, and, taking his hand, assured him I did not mean to be unkind; I had no idea there was really anything to distress him, and, in fact, made my apologies as best I could. I was too fond of Dugald to indulge a jesting propensity when I found any real

cause for sympathy to exist.

"There now," said I, "I will order breakfast, and you shall tell me all about it then, for I feel rather incapacitated for anything good without that morning meal, and after it I shall feel a giant refreshed with tea and toast, and capable of giving you any assistance or advice you may require from me;" and so I rang the bell, and Dugald played a lively air with his fingers upon the window-pane to the voice of the rain, which accompanied it in dismal numbers. "Now, my dear fellow," said I, at length getting weary of waiting, and hearing no sound forthcoming but a lively continuation of the above-mentioned harmony, and which, being of a nervous temperament, fidgeted me into innumerable fevers, "what can I do for you?"

"I don't believe there is any sympathy or feeling left in the world," was the reply, as Dugald flung himself into a chair, and sat moodily

watching the rain.

"My dear boy," said I, holding a nicely buttered piece of toast between my fingers (and I defy any one to feel sentimental when doing so if they have any appetite at all), "I can assure you I have unbounded sympathy for any and all you may have to tell, but having seen you yesterday very gay, I can hardly realise such extreme woe in one night changing the whole current of your being."

"Some people's hair have turned grey from misery in one night

alone," said Dugald, solemnly and sententiously.

Putting on my spectacles I looked at him earnestly, peeringly, as if to see the change alluded to, and then answered meekly, "You have dyed yours very well then, for it looks very brown this morning."

Do not think me unkind, reader; I knew it was best to treat him so; once get Dugald Annesley into the heroic strain, and adieu to all hope

of learning facts, save in metaphor. It had the effect at once.

"I am very silly, Mr. —, and pray forgive me; but I have been worried and tortured, crushed and made miserable; and I scarcely know

what to do, or what to say."

And then he told me all that had occurred, and how, just when he was feeling happier, his companion, a regular boarding-school type young lady, began to talk of Eleanor, and how she told him, with a sweet simper, that report said Lord Ravenscroft was to win the prize, though she, for her part, thought that charming, clever, amusing Mr. Ashton had much more chance; and there had been such a desperate flirtation

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before dinner going on between them; but, then, the other would be such an extremely good match! The idea, as Dugald said, of *Eleanor* condescending to flirting with anybody! The idea of anybody being a good match when applied to Eleanor Stanley! He hated the term—he hated the idea. It was mean and small, unworthy to be uttered by any woman! There I agreed. But, of course, he would not pause for remarks or descantations—his soul was in his subject.

"I fear, Dugald," I managed to put in at last—"I fear your faith is small, if merely from a silly girl's remarks you could allow a shadow of doubt to rest on her you love. You heard the foolish report here, and

disdained to believe it then, and now ---- ?"

"I had not seen her then."

"But, my dear Dugald, in the name of common sense, what would you have the poor girl to have done? She could not rush into your arms before all the world, and it was your fault you were late for dinner,

and consequently your fault that you got so cold a bow!"

"I know that," he replied, impatiently; "but you have not heard all yet. Well, I felt maddened then at this complication of doubt and woe, after so many years of trusting confidence misplaced, and I determined after dinner to learn the worst."

"And quite right, too."

"But then, on further thought, I settled I would not—I would leave it to her, and she should never say that I bound her when she would be free. I would leave it to her to show me if she were changed, and if she were, though her loss would break my heart, she should never say that I had made her mine by the unfair advantage of a promise given in her innocent childhood, when she mistook friendship for love, and knew none but me."

"Remarkably fine, my dear Dugald," I replied, "for a five-act tragedy, but not exactly suited to this wicked, working-day world of ours. Now, don't kill me with a look, nor think that I do not feel for and with you, for I do; but I am an old man, Dugald, and have seen the world, and trust to me that, in nine cases out of ten, first impulses are best, especially in love; and credit me, Dugald, that if you take this line of conduct, it is the very way to lose Eleanor Stanley."

"I have lost her already," he answered, mournfully; "and knowing that I have lost her makes me only cling to the shadow a thousand times more fondly, and dread to decide it by word or act of mine, lest I should

lose even that fleeting, passing shadow too."

"You neglect self in action, Dugald," I replied, going to him, and laying my hand upon his shoulder; "you are more generous than just, and, believe me, as much misery springs from that mistaken course, perhaps more, where others are concerned, than from too contrary being the mainspring to regulate actions. Disinterestedness is a noble feeling, but it may degenerate into weakness, and where happiness is concerned, self-love (you understand me, I do not mean selfishness, for that is very different) should not be quite omitted from the scale. Many a deed deemed heroic is far otherwise to my mind, for men often sacrifice the happiness of those they love to please the caprices and mistaken fancies of the worldly-wise who come between them and happiness."

Dugald shook his head.

"You do not agree?"

"I don't know," he answered; "I never saw it in that light before; yesterday I acted very otherwise. When we left the dining-room, Dennis Conway detained me talking in the one drawing-room some time, whilst Eleanor was in the other. When I escaped, I found myself near her; but she looked so happy and so beautiful, I felt she was born for a high estate, and ought not to suffer poverty through my love."

"I thought you would have been above such common-place ideas,

Dugald."

"Are they common-place?" he replied, with a bitter smile; "they are common sense, I believe. I went near, but did not speak to her."

I involuntarily lifted up my eyebrows.

"Wrong again?" he asked. "And there I stood, she turning from me, and I turned to stone. At last the conversation turned upon her cousin, and Mr. Ashton praised Ida warmly. 'You do not know Miss Ida Stanley, Mr. Annesley?' he remarked to me; and when I said 'Yes, that I knew her well; that she once lived near my home, and I had seen her that day; that, in fact, my visit to Morley was the reason which made us arrive so late'—you should have seen Eleanor then. She turned her eyes full upon me—they actually flashed upon me, with a scorching, lightning flash, and such a glance of ineffable scorn followed, whilst her lips curled so contemptuously, I could have died gladly, rather than be looked on so. It was so cruel after all I had done, and loved, and suffered—it was weak and unworthy, and I felt I had lost her, and that she had done the same by me, or she never could have looked like that, or mistrusted my love so; do you think she could, Mr. ——?" he asked, sharply, as I stood by the fire, pondering on it all.

"Your feelings are too ardent, too little under control, Dugald, for you ever to be a happy man," I replied; "you brought this misery on

vourself."

"Oh, of course," he interrupted, bitterly; "she was right, and I was

wrong; every one will say that; they always do in these cases."

"No," I said, "I don't think she was right at all, but you were also wrong; and if you continue your present line of conduct to a proud woman such as Eleanor Stanley is, you will end in plunging both in utter misery. Take my advice; see Eleanor, and explain to her all, and if she be worthy of your love, she will forgive you all, and own her fault. Rank and riches will but little sway her then; but maintain your stubborn silence, and she is, indeed, lost to you."

He sighed. "I do not think you are right, Mr. ---."

"Believe me, I am. Miss Stanley is so accustomed to rule—to have all at her feet. She considers homage to be her due, and to be treated with indifference by her lover is a thing which I doubt her being a woman noble enough to forgive, unless forgiveness be demanded."

" I don't agree."

"My dear Dugald," said I, at length thoroughly provoked, "will you allow me to remind you of the old distich, most applicable in your

Flat contradiction can you bear, When you are right and know you are."

He returned to his tune on the window-pane-at last, "I'am asked to

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Arlingford Hall again to-day. Conway asked me, and he is coming for me at twelve—shall I go, or not?"

"Go! decidedly. I am very glad to hear it. Half-past ten now."

" You are tired of me," said he, laughing at last.

"No, not exactly—that is to say, not at all if you would listen to reason; but when a man comes to you for advice, and all the time says nothing to his doctor but 'Physician, heal thyself,' I must confess it is mortifying to bear."

"Now you must confess, Mr. ——," exclaimed he, with his own bright sunny smile, "I am generally a very good boy, only you must let me

manage Eleanor my own way."

" And lose her."

"Heaven forbid-no. Feelings and duties are opposed, but I must

not let the former govern the latter."

"Are you certain that you know which is your duty? There are moments in life when it is difficult to know which is the right, which the wrong path to follow."

" Good-by, Mr. ---!"

"Good-by, my dear boy, success attend you; but oh! Dugald, as you love me, pause and consider well before you act thus; take an old man's warning—you are wrong. Think of that young creature's happiness, of the evil which may result, if by mistaken motives you blight it,

and turn her proud, deep-feeling nature aside."

"I do think of it," answered Dugald, solemnly; "I do think of Eleanor's happiness far, far more seriously than of my own. If I do wrong, it is the fault of erring human nature. I act under the impression that I am doing right for her, and man cannot do more. Let me once secure her welfare, and it matters little what becomes of me; I would gladly immolate all, even myself, as a sacrifice to secure her peace."

"But when making the sacrifice, Dugald," said I, "may not the fire you light on the altar of self, to offer up your own true heart, in its burning scorch and wither with its blighting flame the heart to secure

whose happiness you offer it?"

"Ah! it may be as you say," he replied, thoughtfully, after a pause;

" I will think of it."

And, with a warm pressure of the hand, we parted. I stood watching his retreating figure long, until a turn in the road hid it out of sight, as he walked on erect through that roaring wind, through that driving pelting rain, battling with the elements. I thought of the earnest, impetuous nature which dwelt therein—of the noble mind and great capacity—and how far with his great speculative, idealising, imaginative mind, where the spirituelle prevailed so strongly over the practical, with his high enthusiasm and unworldly heart, he was capable of battling in like manner with the storms of life. Dugald was of too chivalrous a nature, too single a mind, to be contented in the age in which he lived; a hundred years hence he would be a happier man. His feelings were too acute and varied for the present; his one great fault, his bane, a too jealous fear of acting wrongly preventing him from acting boldly—a habit of pausing to consider, rather than keeping his place perseveringly—and waiting until the full development of that which he wished to

accomplish was fulfilled before he paused to meditate on his acts, made his character somewhat deficient in that firmness which carries all before it; to secure success in all deeds, the one thing needful to join to the courage necessary to cause their ever being undertaken is, never to look back—once allow your eyes to dwell when in action upon the retrospect, and "hurled are dazzling spells into the spongy air, with power to cheat the eye with blear illusion, and give it false presentments." Lot's wife looked earnestly back, and, fear-bound, she became a pillar of salt!

And all day long as I sat by my little fire, watching the drizzling rain, Dugald and Eleanor were never absent from my mind. I continued calculating the probabilities of my advice being followed or rejected. I longed for the clairvoyant power to look into the scenes at Arlingford. I felt half tempted to quarrel with myself for being "heavy and dull this frame of limbs and heart," that I could not rule him by volition, or by being in possession of a sensitive organisation penetrate into the unknown, and in fancy view all that was occurring at that very time, or that must occur ere long, such a little space away. I thought—but who cares for an old man's thoughts—I have lingered with the garrulousness of age too long upon myself already—let me turn to "metal more attractive here."

BURGER'S DRINKING SONG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

BY G. W. THORNBURY.

AUTHOR OF "BALLADS OF THE NEW WORLD."

AH! I swear by Yea and No,
Cup in hand to perish;
All but this good flask I leave
For my heirs to cherish.
Bid them fill my grave with wine
Till it swell to rivers,
Then go break my drinking cup
In ten thousand shivers.

Every man hath nature dowered
With his turn of thinking;
I love best my bit and sup—
I am choice in drinking.
Bit and sup I'd rather have
Than a scolding wife,
I'll never lack for bit and sup
In the march of life.

Any fool may tweak my beard,
Pull me by the nose,
When I want my bit and sup,
When I need repose.
When I'm poor and famine pinched,
A child might then outroar me;
But I'd break a giant's pate
When my bowl's before me.

Wine's the very best of oil,

The mind's lamp that dresses,
Gives the soul the spring to reach
Berenice's tresses.

Wit and wisdom do exhale
From a well-filled "wame,"
All the best philosophy
From the stomach came.

When I'm forced to fast awhile,
I turn catgut-scraper;
Nor my palsied hand has strength
To put thoughts on paper.
But when wine and harmony
Lends the fancy pinions,
Then I beat Euripides
In his own dominions.

Never may I hope for fame
Till I'm full of Rhenish;
Waiter take this cup of mine,
And with such replenish.
When the body's cabinet
Is stored from bin and table,
Then I speak and sing with ease
Half the tongues of Babel.

Ah! I swear by Yea and No,
Cup in hand to perish,
Bit and sup lay in my grave,
Ye who vowed to cherish.
Choirs of spirits bear me up
To the nectar drinkers,
Jove never meant that I should fall,
And perish with the skinkers.

THE WIFE'S AVENGER.

AN IRISH TALE OF THE LAST CENTURY.

By WILLIAM DESMOND, Esq.

I.

It was late in the evening, about the middle of the last century, that a solitary horseman pursued his way over a wild and barren district in the west of Ireland. The man was tall, youthful, and handsome, with dark hair, eyes, and moustachio, a wild and reckless bearing, and a bold, nonchalant manner that told of military service, had he not been heavily armed with a helmet, sword, and pistols, and worn the long scarlet cloak of a heavy dragoon. His charger was a strong, sinewy, well-turned, thorough-bred dapple bay animal, with good trotting action, and immense muscular power, while by their side ran a pure English-bred bull bitch. The snow and sleet fell fast, and the wind blew a perfect hurricane, crashing and splintering the fir-trees in all directions, and beating full in the face of the wayfarers. The rider, however, seemed case-hardened, for beyond gathering his cloak rather more closely around him, he continued to troll forth in a fine voice some rollicking drinking song, popular, doubtless, in the camp. Both the animals laid back their ears, and seemed as if they hardly dared to face the storm.

"Come, Sir Mark!" said the rider, addressing his horse, "this is the first time I have ever known thee show a faint heart, and we have been over many a mile together, and struggled over many a difficulty in war and the chase. Come up, old boy! Thy courage seems to fail thee in thy old age. Come up! what ails thee? By my halidom, many a fool would fancy it was a presentiment of evil, and the storm, and the hooting of the owls, might heighten his belief; with me, however, the faith of such philosophy is not. I credit not such old women's tales. Cheer up, old fellow, for, as I thought, there is a light glimmering and flickering amongst yonder trees, and we will have shelter there for the night, or I will know the reason why not. Sish! Come, Vic, forward; you seem to be as frightened and as cowed as your companion, Sir Mark, here."

Descending the hill, and guided by the light, the horseman stood before a large embattled edifice, dismantled and dilapidated in parts, but from the size and solidity of the building a portion had resisted the hand of time and neglect. He rapped loudly, but beyond the removal of the lights a gloomy silence was the only reply to his summons. He rung and shouted, but beyond the echoes and re-echoes of his own voice along the forests of Scotch firs and the empty corridors of the building itself, not a syllable broke the stillness of the scene. After some twenty minutes had elapsed in the vain attempt of making any one hear, the rider was about to dismount and assail the place vi et armis, by smashing in the door, when a very forbidding face, thatched with an immense quantity of red hair, thrust itself from one of the upper windows, demanding the reason of all this noise at such a late hour of the night, when every one was a-bed.

"I should have fancied you might have guessed," said the horseman. "What else but a night's shelter for myself and my horse do you think, which I am ready to pay for."

"This is no hotel," replied the other.

"Nor did I ever think it was," replied the horseman. " However, we will parley about all that when we are within doors. Come, stir yourself, for I am in no humour to contemplate your ugliness outside the house this stormy evening."

"Then you had better ride on to the hotel, sir. After you get outside the demesne you turn to the left, and after going down about half a mile you take a little boreen* there is to the right; you will then see the hotel,

and a mighty comfortable spot your honour will find it."

"The sign of the Will-o'-the-Wisp-eh? Kept by a Monsieur Feufollet, with plenty of snipes and cocks for supper," said the rider, with a sneer. "No, no, my beauty! you have no green fool to humbug in me. So come, I say, bestir yourself, for a bad cold will not improve those pretty features of yours. Haste now, or I will smash in

With a muttered, yet deep curse, the window was slammed down, and

the forbidding profile withdrawn.

Having waited another quarter of an hour, and no response being vouchsafed to his request, the rider dismounted, and having tied his horse to a tree, commenced a vigorous attack upon the oaken door, endeavouring

"Arrah! what the divil are ye at there?" said the forbidding face, again appearing at the window. "Blood and 'ounds! will ye go to the hotel?"

"No; I have already made up my mind to bivouac here, and I am not easily turned from my purpose," said the soldier, commencing a fresh attack on the door.

"Arrah! will yer be after coming out of that afore I make yer. The divil a lie have I tould yer honour about the hotel. Take the road and the boreen to the right; for be dads sorra a wickeder hand I ever saw back an unmannerly tongue than yer own, sir."

"Make me desist! Faugh, man, you are a fool to jabber so. Come down and let me in, and save your breath to cool your potato porridge. For, by my chivalry and honour, not one foot do I set further on my

road this stormy night; so come what may, here I rest."

After another interval of many minutes' duration, during which the horseman heard a loud and angry altercation, carried on in the Irish gallic, lights began to appear at one or two windows, footsteps to be heard, bars and chains to be unfastened, and the words, spoken in a gruff tone-" He will frustrate all our plans. It is totally impossible to effect it when he is in the house. The screams"—when the front door was opened by the forbidding-countenanced man, who shaded a light with his hand, while he exclaimed:

"Hinself is awake by now, and bids you welcome. Walk in, sir.

gossoon will be round immediately to take your horse."

"Thank you, my man; but an English soldier's first thought is for his horse's comforts, himself the second. So, with your leave or without it, as far as that matters, I will see my horse done up myself, and then I shall be most happy to make the acquaintance of your master."

Having seen his beast well bedded down, and a feed of corn in his manger, the soldier followed the gossoon into the mansion, and was ushered into an old oaken-panelled room, deeply carved and groined, where, before a fire, sat the host himself. He was a man of perhaps forty years of age, of the middle height, but of perfect symmetry; his hair was a jetty black, his whiskers large, although, mayhap, slightly grizzled, and his features regular and prominent, of polished manners (although unfortunately incapable of masking a black heart under even a specious appearance); yet we are almost tempted to write him down handsome, was there not a something hard to define, either of profligacy, or recklessness of moral principles, that froze your kinder feelings, and made you at once regard his acquaintance with distrust, fear, nay, even abhorrence.

"Pat, bring in some more turf," said the host, addressing the gossoon.

"You are welcome, captain; we require a good fire such a night as

"Thank you kindly," replied the soldier. "I am grieved at having disturbed you; but the well-known hospitality of the Irishman, and the exigences of the case—a soldier benighted in a storm—may, I trust, be deemed sufficient apology for my intrusion. I was marching up with my troop, turned off from the high road, lost my way, and must now crave a night's lodging. I am an Englishman, and hope to join my regiment to-morrow in Galway."

"You are welcome, sir," said the host, courteously. "A stranger is

doubly so."

"I must apologise for the rather rude remarks I was led into addressing towards your servant. The manners of the camp, though they may be more honest, are certainly not so polished as the court. May my

profession stand godfather to my sins?"

"Certainly. Rhu Con is but one of our Kerry diamonds, rougher than you connoisseurs delight in — honest," said the host, accenting the last word with a sneer. "Hark! I hear footfalls, we must have aroused my friends, two honest gentlemen, quiet country boys of Connemara, plain, unsophisticated folk."

With the gossoon and the turf entered two as unsophisticated gentlemen as we might ever wish to see, if that virtue consists in a coarse man-

ner, a rude bearing, and very unfavourable and sinister features.

"The top of the morning to you, captain," said the darkest of the twain, "for methinks we have lived to see another day, so we will crown our success in a big drink. The materials, Pat, my boy; a soldier does not fear whisky, women, or war, and from your appearance, captain, I conclude you have seen service."

"I have. I have lain honourably wounded where a battle-field has

reaped its harvest plentifully."

"Here is to the brave!" said the host, mixing a strong tumbler of

whisky-punch. "You will pledge us, surely?"

"Certainly," said the soldier, producing a beautifully chased silver flagon. "Like a good soldier, I am prepared on all sides. Here is to you, master."

"But surely you will pledge me in mine own liquor, or I am enacting

but a sorry host."

"You must excuse me; I decline."
Do you doubt my hospitality?"

"Doubt our hospitality? Dare you, sir, offer such an insult to three gentlemen?" said the dark man.

"What I have done I have dared; what I have dared I must be re-

sponsible for," said the officer.

"Hush, O'Rourke!" said the host. "As long as a stranger is under my roof-tree, he shall do as he pleases. Perhaps the gentleman has something to lose."

"Nothing," replied the officer; "a soldier of fortune seldom has. My home is the battle-field. Yet, too, there is one whom I love, and

she may have some small claim on my existence."

"Oh! a lovesick swain. Methought our officers had a wife, or, at least, a sweetheart, in every town," said O'Rourke. "Perhaps, captain, you will see us through a game of spoilt five?"

"No, I am wearied with my journey, and would, with your kind per-

mission, prefer seeking 'Nature's soft nurse'-sleep."

"We have some real moonshine brandy and bog-still potheen, that never paid a fivepenny duty to king or country," said the host.

"Neither, I am much obliged," replied the stranger. "And with

your kind permission, sirs, good night."

Following the gossoon up a fine old oak staircase, the soldier reached, at the end of the corridor, a large and lofty room, wainscoted with black carved wood, and hung round with some old portraits of the present owner's ancestors, a large bed, with faded scarlet brocade curtains, stood in the centre of the room, and a good turf fire blazed on the hearth.

"A spot worthy of a ghost," exclaimed the horseman, glancing around the sombre room at the flickering shadows. "Perhaps some of these fair damsels will descend from their frames, and unfold a tale of blood and murder at the dead of night. Hallo! where is Vic, I wonder?—I suppose she will take care of herself. Probably with Sir Mark. She is

but a fickle lover, divided between me and my horse."

Examining the priming of his pistols, and placing his sword within reach, the soldier simply withdrew his long jack-boots, unclasped his stock, and threw himself on the bed. How long he had slept he knew not, when he was suddenly aroused from his slumbers by the vision of a beautiful lady, attended by an immense black-and-tan bloodhound. Waking himself up, and rubbing his eyes, the vision immediately became a reality.

"I must crave pardon," said the lady, "for my unexpected intrusion, but as we are companions in the same danger, I hope that may be

deemed by you a sufficient excuse."

"The only danger I fear, lady fair, is our falling in love with one another, and my poor heart having to succumb to the artillery of those sweet eyes of yours."

"Sir! I am a wife."

"I am not a saint, madame."

"Captain Inglefield! a truce to such levity, and at such a time, when perhaps we may both be standing upon the threshold of eternity."

"My name! how came you possessed of it?"

"The cause of your seeking a shelter for the night was a visit to an English girl, whose ruined father has settled in these parts. Need I add, her name is Leah Courtney?"

"The Witch of Endor, by all that is mysterious!"

"No, sir, simply an unfortunate lady—the wife of the master of this house. You observed the men who were carousing with my profligate husband. Did you not know one?"

" No, I did not."

"Do you remember a Corporal Bonham in your troop? His real name was Delville. You were the cause of his being tried by a court-martial, and broke—nay, more, disgusted with the degradation, he committed another crime; you again brought him before a court, and he was then sentenced to be flogged. He after that deserted."

"Well do I remember it. As worthless a vagabond as there was in the regiment; and if we ever catch him again, by my halidom we

will try what four hundred lashes will do to his back."

"He was your companion of the evening—the taller man, who never spoke, for fear you might recognise his voice. He knew you well; mentioned your name, and surmised that the cause of your losing your road was a visit to Mr. Courtney's daughter."

"Corporal Bonham here? I will see and have him marched in irons

to Galway ere a week elapses then."

- "He hates you as intensely as you hate him. He is revengeful, and has sworn, by every oath he holds binding, he will have your life this But that is not all: by thus becoming the victim, you will avert my doom by twenty-four hours-but for twenty-four hours only. For refusing to sign a deed, whereby I placed the whole of my property in the power of my abandoned husband, he and his two colleagues conceived the diabolical and infamous design of my murder! Your arrival interrupted the commission of the act. They offered you drugged wine and spirits, you refused; again foiled, they proposed cards, hoping that, under the excitement of the game, you might drink to quench your fevered thirst; you refused again, and their aims were defeated. Delville knows your character well. He says you are a desperate man when aroused, and totally destitute of fear. Their courage almost failed at this, although they calculated upon the odds of three men to onesurprised in sleep. They drank deep, however, to arouse their spirits. The fit being on them, like all drunkards they knew not when to stop; and they are now so overcome by the wine and spirits they have taken, that in a very short time I expect they will be totally insensible. I shall then, sir, throw myself upon your protection, and fly. I trust I do not sue in vain."
- "By Heaven! no, madame. My life is at your service. What villany! I can hardly believe but that it is some horrid dream—some haunting vision conjured up from the deep abyss of hell itself."

"Alas! sir, it is stern reality."

"We will fly -at once!"

"That is impossible. At present my abandoned and profligate husband is sufficiently sober and collected to be able to define causes and reasons. He would assert the prerogative our Church laws have given him over me, would insist on my detention, and ere you could return with assistance I should be murdered, and my lifeless corpse sank in yonder moat, with my blood on the head of the man who, at the altar of his God, has sworn to love and protect me. The villains whom he has around him would be easily suborned as witnesses, and swear I was

abroad, in France or Italy, and your assertion, borne out as it would be only by your bare word, would be hardly credited. So deep has he laid his infernal plans, that for weeks the demon has imprisoned me in my chamber, giving out to the world that I was in the south of France on a visit to my sister."

"And how came you linked to such a fiend in human shape?" inquired

Captain Inglefield, with horror.

"My tale is a sad one. I am a Canadian by birth, where my father realised a comfortable fortune as a merchant. He was a widower, my mother having died a year after my birth, and left him but two childrenmyself and my sister. We were co-heiresses. Some years ago my sister married a French nobleman of the ancient régime, and settled in France. After my father's death I went to live with my sister, at their château on the banks of the Loire, where I met the first people of the day. Her husband was a great patron of art, science, and literature, and some of the cleverest men-authors, politicians, and actors-were constant visitors at this château. In the winter we went up to Paris for the season, where again I saw that society—the pleasantest you will allow—where talent, science, and the belles lettres find their equal. The wits and savants dined regularly at my sister's hotel, and the 'best set,' to use a very conventional phrase, were always at her balls and parties, and Voltaire and Rousseau were both intimate friends at my sister's salons. One evening, at a state ball given by the King Louis le Quinzième, I was introduced to Monsieur O'Grady, an Irish political refugee, of reputed wealth, and noble family. Hate him—abhor him—loathe him—despise him, as I now do, I cannot but allow, then he was handsome, affable, and accomplished; young in years, though old in deceit, vice, and the ways of the world. He was clever, shrewd, deep, and talented; admitted into the first circles of society in Paris, courted by the learned, favoured by royalty itself, the admiration of the women, and the envy of the men; yet proved so soon to be as an accomplished a fiend as Belial alone could figure. So beautifully does the god of sin fashion his votaries, that I am almost led to fancy—as the knowledge of vowels in Hebrew is mere conjecture—that Eve was seduced by the form of a handsome man, yet more perfect than Adam, rather than the authorised version of the serpent."

"Tush! madame; you slide on holy ground."

"To proceed with my sad and melancholy narrative," said the lady, bursting into tears. "We made inquiries anent Monsieur O'Grady; they were satisfactory. He was the victim of a state policy. A patriot who, from the generally believed persecution of Irish Catholics by the Saxon Protestants, was, as they universally are in France, an object of compassionate interest. He wrote, I understood, for some of the light periodical literature of the times in England; more, perhaps, to while away an idle hour than for any emolument. He proposed—I accepted—we were married; and, in one short week, my day-dream of happiness Instead of a man, I had linked my destiny to a fiend incarnate a worthless demon. I was rich, he was an Irish adventurer, who had been scouted from England for perpetrating a most disgraceful fraud at cards, narrowly escaped transportation, yet was a paid emissary and spy of the British Government. He had considerable talent, and wrote convincingly and purely, yet debased that talent by contributing to the most revolutionary press that ever existed, and pandering to the vitiated tastes of the turbulent and disaffected, abusing with all the power of a clever mind the very Government upon which he so infamously and traitorously depended for his daily bread. My fortune of course placed him at once in a real position, and he could then safely assume a place in the society of the French capital he had previously held upon a very questionable tenure. Yet, believe me, sir, I forgave him every deception he had practised upon me, and, in the fulness of my heart, gave up all the worldly possessions over which I had any power, to his command. of you little know the disinterested affection a true and faithful wife bears towards even the most profligate of husbands, or the trials she will endure for his sake, nay, even to gratify his pleasures. But, sir, you may judge of my feelings; nay, doubtless, commiserate them, too, when you hear that the man for whom I had done so much, for whom I would have gone through fire and water, or, like the barbarity of some far distant lands, be buried alive for—that that creature, I say, should be so base, so cruel, so heartless as to-three weeks after our marriage-day-never return to our home for thirty-four hours! The suspense and anguish I felt I cannot wish you to picture, suffice it for you to believe my words, when I say it was intense. But, sir, judge, if you can, how that anguish and that suspense must have been quickly turned into extreme disgust, when I beheld the sole object of my love—bar my God!—return almost disgustingly under the influence of severe drinking, and throwing himself on the sofa, blurt out with many a frightful oath at his ill-luck—that he had lost eight thousand francs by play. I then found out my husband was a determined gamester, a roue, and a spendthrift; yet, with all these damning imperfections on his head, so past finding out are the ways of womankind, that for weal or woe, for good or bad, come what might, I would have stood unmoved and impregnable, through adversity and calumny-nay, even through justice and law-his patient, suffering, loving, though cruellyenduring wife! His failings I could forgive—his faults and vice never!

"His first proposal was that I should become his slave, and, by whatever poor powers of charming others I may be endowed with, endeavour to decoy some foolish moth to fly towards the candle of his own destruction. I indignantly scorned his wish. An English youth, with more gains than brains, had lately come over to perform the national farce which the English entitle le grand tour. His tutor was the fool comparative, he was the fool positive. He had hitherto proved an easy victim; but as the worm even sometimes turns on its oppressors, so the pigeon will at times peck the hawk. The plum-porridge-eating youth had turned restive, and would not go on. My husband naively observed, he must enforce the old ditty, and though he would not 'vallop him, oh! no! no!' yet I must be the 'gee whoo up, Neddy,' and decoy the miserable wretch on to pander to their base and infamous desires. I refused. Henceforth I became the victim of my own husband's inveterate hatred; no persecution nor oppression was too shameful for him to enact; he even struck me to the ground, and kicked me while fainting; yet I bore all his cowardly brutality without repining and without murmurs, and,

strange as it may appear to men, I loved him still.

"My sister saw I was truly unhappy, and offered me a home; but so strong, so intense was my affection, so binding did I consider the oath I had sworn at the altar, I refused with a breaking heart her kind offer. The pang was bitter, as bitter as women, whose sole existence is love, can feel!

"Our career in Paris was brief, though to him, doubtless, happy, or, at least, exciting, for, after a miserable year, he had spent my fortune, and

we were then beggars!

"My husband, having run a Frenchman through in a duel from a quarrel at cards, proposed we should try our fortunes in London, more for reason of his own safety than any pleasure to me. He told me he had a good literary connexion there, and I will allow to you there was some vanity of spirit, some of the old leaven of curiosity, that made me so readily accede to his wishes-I desired to see your modern Babylon. We left Paris, and reached London. We left a splendid hotel, and reached a miserable garret in one of the streets off the Strand. We passed from the chrysalis of wealth to poverty—reversed the order of nature, and passed from the butterfly to the grub. I have already alluded to our hopes of my husband's 'literary connexion,' but they only proved a mere rope of sand. I do not mean to convey for one moment he had not talents. He had; but they were talents perverted and misapplied, and few of the publishers, authors, or editors of those times could be induced to employ such a very questionable source. Nay, even when he did realise a little money by a good paper for some magazine, or a leader for some newspaper, the money was spent in his own gratification, in the fighting of bull-dogs, or a main of cocks, or even in the certain robbery he endured at a silver billiard-table or a copper hell-room, and night after night have I had to go to our wretched bed supperless, dinnerless, wanting almost to fainting, and, except aided by some kind and charitable neighbour, compelled to endeavour to drown my hunger in sleep. Nay, to such straits have we been driven to, that we were forced to copy out music at twopence a folio page for the orchestra of some musical tavern.

"We were almost ruined down to a solitary sixpence, and my husband declared he would enlist, or otherwise we must have to enter upon parish relief. His character had become so notorious, that he could not even obtain the humble pittance of a clerk or scribe, when a cousin died, and he became heir and owner of his property. We immediately set off for Ireland, and he styled himself The O'Grady, and had me introduced as Madame; talked largely of our French connexions, and agitated upon the act of the Union, and heralded forth his deep antipathy to England, and his love of 'sweet Erin's isle.' He soon became popular hereabouts, and quickly gained the good opinion of all, both high and low, of this

very superficially observing race of people.

"The rent-roll of an Irishman is generally believed to be the reversion of a law-suit, and it certainly was in our case, for 'my cousin' had most successfully succeeded in achieving the apparent aim of the Celtic race, namely, leaving his successor perfectly destitute of money. Our reputed income was ten thousand pounds a year, our real as many shillings!

"But thus we lived on—in a sort of barbaric splendour; my husband sinking deeper and deeper in the slough, which must ever be the fate of the drunkard and gambler. The driver* was ordered to rack the tenants in vain. The agent had no more money, and the banks refused to cash any further cheques on our account. Usurers in Dublin were applied to, who averted the day only by hastening the crisis to a certainty. We then lived in the normal state of this district; my husband had his liberty,

^{*} Anglice, under-steward.

cess-server's life was reckoned at that era of no more value than a woodcock's, and the country gentlemen of Connemara thanked the government, and powder and slugs, that a writ was only worth the paper it was drawn upon.]—It was the alternative of imprisonment within this castle and domain, or that in the Bench in Dublin. We never stirred out, we saw no society, and my husband drank deeper and deeper each succeeding night. His temper soured and disappointed, his conduct became only the more brutal towards me by each successive debauch. His friends were now become so select as to include only the two reprobates you saw below, one a deserter, the other a smuggler and wrecker, neither considering any enormity too revolting or too hazardous to dare. My husband was then ostracised completely by all the society in this neighbourhood, and left alone in this dreary wilderness to his vice and brutality.

"At this time an event occurred that many would hold in the light of

a blessing to poor miserable me; it has proved but a curse!

"A cousin dying intestate in America, my sister and myself were found to be the next of kin and co-heiresses to some twelve thousand pounds. With a magnanimity disinterested as it was noble, my dear sister Florence made over the whole to me, adding, however, in a note my husband has never seen, that should I die childless, the whole should revert to her children. To this I sincerely acceded, though with a thrill of passionate distress at my feeling sure my heart will never be moved by the tenderness of a mother for its offspring—a sympathy with which I can never

expect a man to appreciate!

"As soon as my husband was made aware of that which the vulgar call 'our good luck,' he commemorated the event by a week of insensible drunkenness, while in this wild revelry he was readily kept in countenance by the deserter and wrecker. Once, having regained his senses, he insisted I should give him full power over the twelve thousand pounds. This I positively and determinedly refused. He has endeavoured to cajole me of it by a hollow love and a pretended affection, or to compel his wish by threats and violence. Seeing I was obdurate, he fell back upon the councils of his two worthless companions. The conference was long and stormy. My husband having hardly fallen so deeply in damning sin—so lost to every divine and moral obligation, as to sell his soul irrecoverably to hell, by that which they so strenuously urged—the murder of his own wife!

"My blood runs cold as I now tell you. I was this very evening to have been slain. Such, however, was to have been the case if, by a divine interposition of Providence, you, sir, had not been benighted, and com-

pelled to seek shelter beneath this roof.

"The villains undertook my death provided they received half the fortune I had just become endowed with. My husband hesitated long, and combatted the idea of shedding the blood of his own wife for some weeks. However, as the repeated proximity to danger divests our feelings of all fear, so the familiarising our minds to sin strips it of its turpitude and enormity, its consequences and deadliness. My husband acceded. This night I was to have been murdered in my sleep, my headless trunk thrown into yonder moat, my head calcined in lime; and so precisely have they laid their plans, my husband has this very day forged my will, in which he has made himself the residuary legatee."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Captain Inglefield, scarcely able to articulate from the feelings aroused at the enormities he heard narrated. "Your disclosures, madame, savour more of some hideous dream than a cold-

blooded reality."

We have already mentioned that the officer was accompanied on his march by a bull-terrier, and the lady entered the room with her favourite bloodhound following. Few of our readers—even of the fairer sex but must be fully aware of the belligerous nature of the mastiff breeds, and their tenacity in the combat when engaged; while the bloodhound, although gentle and faithful as a rule, is, when once aroused, perhaps the most fierce after the mastiff of the dog species, never to be trusted by man, and resigning the contest only with death when set upon by its sort. Now, Vic (the dragoon's canine companion) had not been shut up in the stables with the horse, as her master had jumped at the conclusion, but she was left outside the house to the fury of the storm. After howling and whining for a considerable time without the desired effect, she curled herself at the foot of an old tree, and took refuge in sleep, and remained so until that period when the lady had almost concluded her narrative. Being awoke by the wind, which uprooted an immense tree near where she lay, and scared her from the restingplace, Vic determined upon a survey of the place, assisted as she became by the grey glimmer of the morning. Seeing a window below stairs within her reach, the dog dashed through it, shivering the pane to atoms, and having effected an entrance into the house, began hunting for her master. Here she experienced great difficulty from the scent being almost cold, and doubtless would have given up the search in despair had she not been attracted to the room by the exclamation of her master at the conclusion of Mrs. O'Gorman's disclosures. Guided by his voice she reached the room. The bloodhound-her temper excited at what she conceived a hostile intrusion of a strange dog-attacked Vic with all the vigour and rage it is possible to imagine. The mastiff retaliated with all the energy her belligerous nature was possessed of. The officer seized the poker in the vain endeavour of parting them, and even compressed his animal's tail until it bled again. The effort was useless, for there the brutes lay growling, panting, choking, tearing one another's flesh, engulphing one another's limbs in their immense jaws, until the noise and tumult aroused the whole house, echoing and reechoing through the long and arched corridors, and drowning the very storm in their shrieking rage and angry growls. The winds, the elements, the cries of men, or the destruction of fire, might have allowed O'Gorman to slumber on unconsciously in his drunken sleep; but the noise of a dog-fight-his favourite and much-loved pastime-at once recalled him to partial consciousness. Seizing his sword, he rushed in the direction whence the row of the fight came, and there he beheld-a sight that sobered him in a moment—his wife in the bedchamber of his guest, witnessing the bloody fray.

"So the gratitude of the Saxon to the Celt for his hospitality for benighting the soldier in distress," hissed O'Gorman, his whole frame quivering with rage, "is the seduction and ruin of his wife—eh, villain?"

"Liar!" exclaimed Inglefield, as their swords crossed. "Murderer! most foul!"

NOVELS OF THE SEASON.

FRANCIS I. wrote of Agnes Sorel-

Gentille Agnès, plus d'honneur tu mérite La cause étant de France recouvrer, Que ce que peut dedans un cloître ouvrir, Close nonain, en bien dévot hermite;

and if it is possible to do justice to a character which, had it not been for the contemporary fame of Joan of Arc, would probably have attained still higher historic celebrity, Mr. G. P. R. James has certainly done his best. The author of "Richelieu" is still the prince of story-tellers. His ingenuity is unbounded; his faculty of getting up scenes and incidents, especially when, as in this instance, aided by history, is astounding—incidents, scenes, characters, succeed to one another with fantas-magoric quickness, and the reader is hurried on, breathless with interest, to the end. This is far from being the case with the greater part of modern novels. Agnes Sorel is not, however, strictly the heroine of the book—it is another Agnes, a love-child of the Duke of Orleans, brought up by a Jean Charost, at that time a mere boy, secretary to the duke,

and the hero of the story.

That we have in this romance* an admirable painting of the actions of the fifteenth century—life-like pictures of the great characters of the epoch, dressed in the garb of the times, and moved by those springs of action which influenced men in that age of iron and chivalry, the name of the author is a sufficient guarantee. We have the harassing family quarrels and seditions of the French princes distinctly and clearly placed before us; the murder of the Duke of Orleans in the streets of Paris, Jean Charost put to the peine forte et dure, the rise of the Armagnac faction, the battle of Agincourt, the patriotism of Agnes, the siege of Bourges, and the final success of Charles VII. The scene opens in the house of the great merchant of Bourges, Jacques Cœur—a Teniers-like painting of a room like a dungeon, in the turret of a tall house in olden Paris; it concludes appropriately, and after the good old fashion, with the wedding of Jean Charost-a little battered about by civil warswith his adopted Agnes. Mr. James does not appear to hold the same historical views as Francis I., for he makes Agnes Sorel die by poison. Certain it is she was in the abbey of Jumiéges, and, according to some, died in childbed; according to others, she died poisoned. Certain it is, also, that she died penitent, making to the ladies of her service a long oration on the vanity of pleasures, and the fragility of beauty, "which," says the quaint old Anquetil, "they listened to, to remember only, most probably, under similar circumstances to those under which they heard it."

The French claim the victory of Waterloo, or Mont St. Jean as they call it. "After eight hours' fire, and charges of infantry and cavalry,"

^{*} Agnes Sorel: an Historical Romance. By G. P. R. James, Esq. 3 vols. T. C. Newby.

says the official account, "all the army saw with joy the battle gained, and the field of battle in our power." Wherefore, then, the slow, secret, but resolute preparations going on to avenge that fatal engagement? Still more so, wherefore solely directed against England? At least the Prussians should divide with us one-half of the resentment. They lay claim to the whole. The official account, after recording General Zeiten's arrival near Smolhain, describes him as charging the enemy's right flank, and "this movement decided the fate of the enemy." Now, truth to say, the French account does not quite tally with this. It attributes the fate of the day to a charge directed by the English against the flank of four regiments of the guard. Marshal Ney, who took these four regiments from the Emperor's own hand, avowedly as a dernier resort, coincides in this view of the case. The Spanish account (Miguel de Alava's) says the same thing. We need not say that almost all English authorities agree upon this point. The fact is, that the defeat of the imperial guard took place at nearly the extreme of the British right, when the Prussians were engaged on the extreme left of our position. We are willing, however, to concede half the honour of Waterloo to the Prussians, but not the whole; and they ought, therefore,

to divide with us the resentment of the Napoleon dynasty.

We cannot, however, see, even if we were left single-handed to combat the martial hosts of France, that we should have any just cause of appre-True, that there are symptoms of fear in official quarters; trophies of our prowess are carefully put out of the way, not to offend Gallic sensibilities; caricatures of Napoleon le Petit are tabooed on the stage, or in print; but official fear is not national, nor is it contagious. "It is of great consequence to the European cause," says Mr. James Simpson, "that the fact should be remembered that England, with hardly one-fifth part of her regular force, was strong enough to defeat the finest army of France." To know thoroughly how this was effected is well worthy of every Englishman's study in the present critical times. "Jemmy" Simpson's account† may not be the best-it certainly is not so graphic as Alison's, nor so detailed as Siborne's, but it contains many facts and discussions not to be met with elsewhere, aided by two admirable little plans of the battle. We therefore cordially recommend it as at once an amusing, instructive, and encouraging guide. "With our very proper precautions against invasion," writes the author, "it is consolatory to reflect how much may be done by very inferior numbers of determined troops. If the present generation will fight like Waterloo men—and so they will when called upon—50,000 men would defy any force that could land on our shores." Let every man, then, be well imbued with what his countrymen did at Waterloo (where 300 Highlanders defeated 3000 French, and a charge of cavalry took 2000 prisoners), and he will never flinch from his duty.

^{*} Since writing the above, we see that Baron von Muffling goes still further, and says that the Duke only advanced after the French were in full retreat before the Prussians.

[†] Paris after Waterloo. Notes taken at the Time, and hitherto Unpublished; including a revised Edition—the tenth—of a Visit to Flanders and the Field. By James Simpson, Esq., Advocate. William Blackwood and Sons.

The author of "Francis Croft,"* a new and somewhat bold claimant for laurels in fiction, proclaims a theory of success, the first part of which, —viz., that a work to be successful must, in addition to intrinsic merit, contain the element of popularity—is old; but the second—viz., that the said element of popularity may be something not good or bad in itself, some fault in art, or some vice in sentiment, which happens to be agreeable to the public in one of its multiple changes of mood—is new. Whether "Francis Croft" will be one of those happy hits "which, unexpected by authors, publishers, and critics, become classics in our language," we shall not venture to pronounce. It is a story after the fashion of those told by Fielding and Smollett, but clothed in the accepted form and style of modern times; depicting the same low society without the redeeming wit, and the same scenes of vice and profligacy without the honesty of the good old English novelists, but still with many merits and peculiarities such as might be expected from a pen evidently well schooled in the literary fashions of our own times.

Francis Croft, abandoned by his parents as a child, is turned out of house as a boy, by a protector of no importance to the story, and after sundry wayside adventures is housed among thieves and gamesters in London. A first step in life, resulting from such an introduction to the world, is playing a part in an abduction, in which, luckily, the boy's remorse comes to his rescue. A second and a more important step is his reception, and subsequent adoption, by a Mr. and Mrs. Marston, who had also previously adopted, by a coincidence peculiar to fiction, his own sister, Olympia. Around these Marstons hang the greater mass of incidents which go up to make a whole. We are pretty soon let into the secret that the beauteous Madame Camilla is but a modern Aspasia, "bridled into exclusiveness," and Mr. Marston a doubtful character living under an alias, enjoying the fruits of ill-acquired wealth, moving in doubtful society, of which Frank's episode of love with the fair Julia is a tolerable example, and persecuted by threats of betrayal by a whole troop of villains, every individual of whom is fresh, however, from the nest in which Frank was himself first incubated into life.

Such an unnatural state of things cannot but terminate with a catastrophe. Frank has taken to authorship as a profession, but he has the greatest difficulty in saving his sister Olympia from the wreck that attends upon the breaking up of the Marston establishment. There is also a by-play of Frank's father having been an unmerited sufferer by Marston's, alias Bennett's, delinquency, and of Frank being unintentionally an agent of retribution through the medium of the wronged and revengeful old merchant Kempis, who is himself robbed and murdered at last by the same "Snapdragon" gang. There is also a wedding very quietly performed, about the middle of the story, between Frank and the orphan daughter of a literary acquaintance, and some charming and well told episodes, showing how love may grow up after marriage—a somewhat new feature in works of this description. Olympia's strange career is also sobered down in the end by a wise match. The incidents that

^{*} The Fortunes of Francis Croft: an Autobiography. In 3 vols. Chapman and Hall.

belong, however, to this chequered autobiography give but a very faint idea of the narrator's forte. The characters which we have barely sketched are brought forth in strong—almost glaring colours—and vice, odious in itself, is here depicted, if possible, as still more so; for there is at times a vain and frivolous attempt to gloss it over by fashionable superciliousness, or to clothe it with the veil of classic allusions. But it is evident, that while the author considers human society to be an incoherent coil of injustice, violence, strife, misery, and vice—varied by some sparkling threads of virtue—he has also a disposition to view it in a more genial and hopeful way—indeed, this acknowledged record of sorrow, suffering, and crime, is more than redeemed by the sweetly depicted scenes in which, with Hope as his guide and Faith as his companion, Frank becomes more and more sensible of all the worth and virtue that are concentrated in her whom he wedded more in honour than in love, and in companionship with whom he ultimately finds and

fashions a happiness of his own!

How we envy the boy who shall read Frederick Hardman's "Hidden Treasures"* for the first time. How he will fly through the forest with gallant old Sabertash, cut to pieces no end of "parley-vous" in defence of the royal treasure, and breathlessly bury it amid the ruins of Hohenstein Castle! But even still more deeply will his interest be excited by the wrongs of young Sigismund, and of his good old grandmother, expelled from their hereditary domain of Hohenberg by the wiles of a crafty attorney. And then the vain search for documents in that old black chest, the invasion of the cottage by the French, Sigismund's heroic conduct, poor old Sabertash once more a prisoner, and the attorney (anglicised by Mr. Hardman into Mr. Brown) apparently definitely triumphant, prelude admirably the campaign of Leipsic and the deliverance of Germany, for which sacred object Sigismund and Sabertash fight in strange guise, and with still stranger weapons, side by side. And lastly comes retribution: old Brown tumbled down the well in search of the hidden treasure, Sigismund restored to Hohenberg, and "Captain" Sabertash presented with the Benkenstein estate for his combined honesty, gallantry, and loyalty. This is no doubt a German story, somewhat altered for young England's tastes, but far superior to the ordinary run of nouvellettes concocted for young people.

Commerce and romance have been rarely brought into juxta-position. The sober, plodding habits of industry are supposed to be antagonistic to all literary taste, and poetry is looked upon with contemptuous eye by your true worshipper of Mammon. But this is alike false and erroneous; and a little work with a badly chosen name, "The Vicissitudes of Commerce,"† will suffice for the present to show it. How true to the reality are the descriptions of the cottages scattered over the hill-sides of the moory districts of Lancashire, with their walls and porch built up of flat stones? How accurate the portraits of Hargreaves and his wife Jenny—

† The Vicissitudes of Commerce: a Tale of the Cotton Trade. 2 vols. Saunders and Otley.

^{*} Hidden Treasures; or, the Heir of Hohenberg. Edited by Frederick Hardman, with Illustrations. Grant and Griffith.

the original spinning Jenny-of Morland and his wife and family? How changed again the scene when spinning and weaving was given out by the manufacturers to each poor cottager; when Hargreaves and Morland were plundered of their little all, and driven from their homes for having discovered how one could do the work of twenty; to when large mansions were built to receive the "jenny," and cities grew up by their sides as of old, they gathered around the monastery and the feudal castle! All these things are not without romance, no more so than the habits and manners, nor the quaint dialect of the Lancastrian peasantry, so well sustained in these volumes. And then, again, is love-true modest loveunknown in the mills? the history of Maria St. Crost and Frank Morland will attest to the contrary. With far less pretension about it than most of the works of art we have lately had to comment upon, this story of the cotton trade and Lancashire life shows a greater intimacy on the part of the author with his subject, and contains more life-like descriptions of scenes and characters, than it has been our lot to peruse for some time past.

WOULD YOU REMEMBER ME?

BY J. E. CARPENTER.

Would you remember me, take for a token
A flower from the garden, a rose from the tree,
And when the blossom lies scentless and broken,
Wither'd and dead—'twill remind you of me.

Would you remember me, walk by the ocean
When the rich sunset falls over the sea,
The weeds at your feet, cast ashore by its motion,
The sport of the waves—they'll remind you of me.

Would you remember me—should it be only
Where in the summer I wander'd with thee;—
Then if you feel in the world you are lonely,
Check not the tear—'twill remind you of me.

Would you remember me when we are parted,
Never, perchance, more each other to see;—
Mingle again with the young and light-hearted,
The mirth and the song will remind you of me.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

VI.

The palace of the king, some part of which, in spite of repeated fires, may yet be seen, was situated at the western extremity of the island, and presented, in the days of Philip le Bel, the appearance of a cluster of towers* of great strength. It was only on nearer approach that irregular spaces of wall between them, with small and grated windows, showed that they were separated from each other by ill-lighted apartments or corridors. The piece of low ground that divided the palace from the river was laid out in gardens, more with a view to furnishing the royal table than to ornament. Beyond these, and separated from them but by a mere streamlet that has long since disappeared, lay a piece of marshy greensward which belonged to a religious community; the whole forming a triangular flat terminating in the point on which has since risen the solid masonry supporting the Place Dauphine.

The closet in which the king was accustomed to transact his more private business, and where he spent much of his time, was situated in one of the towers on the west side of the building, whence, from a small iron balcony, he commanded the forest scenery, and could trace the windings of the river through verdant plains and shady woodland until it blended

with the cool tints of the horizon.

Here, one morning, he sat listening with clouded brow to the minister of finance, whose audiences, always following close upon each other, had

of late augmented in frequency to an ominous degree.

The king wore a long azure robe broidered with golden lilies, and trimmed with ermine, over which descended, across his well-opened chest, the broad baldric, studded with stones of price, that sustained his richly-mounted sword; a costume well calculated to set off his noble figure to the best advantage, but for the graceless length of the upturned shoe then introduced for the first time. His hair, parted on the brow, fell in long locks upon his shoulders after the manner of the Frankish kings, and was kept from the face by a small rim of gold or coronet. Philip le Bel fully justified the surname which the remarkable graces of his person had acquired for him. His form, towering above the vulgar, was a model of

^{*} The earlier kings of France forbad, under severe penalties, their nobility to build towers, being desirous of preserving them as one of the royal privileges; it is needless to say that this edict was set at naught, though not with impunity. One noble lady, after standing a siege in defence of her towers, which were razed to the ground, with true feminine pertinacity rebuilt them when the king's troops had retired from her province. The tower being forbidden fruit seems to have been valued accordingly, many nobles raising so many as seven, and in some instances eight.

manly symmetry and strength: but there was something in the bold outlines of his countenance whose expression was that of habitual severity, and in his keen, piercing glance, which said how the spirit within deserved to be handed down to posterity in his cognomen rather than the mere shell that enclosed it.

Enguerrand de Marigni, in whomwas vested the important charge of superintendant des finances, possessed, as well as the no less celebrated Guillaume de Nogaret, the chancellor, the confidence and favour of the king in no ordinary degree. They were, indeed, both able and ready, and, what was to the full as convenient to a prince endowed with singular talents and violent passions, most unscrupulous tools. Enguerrand de Marigni was of middle height and robust form. His face, completely shaved, though unmarked by any distinguishing trait, was not unpleasing in its general expression; it was only when his bad feelings were roused that it became susceptible of the varying symptoms of cunning, hatred, and arrogance in all their different stages. But for the present his bearing was composed and his aspect serene, as though all were still and unruffled within his breast.

"To be brief, sire, as you ever like one to be," Enguerrand was saying, "the royal coffers are all empty—drained to the last farthing—all those who have claims on them have been again put off for another term; so unless Barbette can again avail us—"

The king smiled a cold smile that was peculiarly his own, and which needed no comment.

"I know well," continued the minister, "that he has advanced so far already that little remains to be done."

"By our faith, he has gotten us the surname of Faux-monnoyeur, and his own house razed to the ground. I do not see how either of us can go much further with prudence."

"Indeed, every single piece of money has been so adulterated and lowered in value, that I do not well see how their intrinsic or nominal worth can be further diminished—the people are so riotous."

"Faith, I forgive them," said the king, laughing; "for we all know that lack of money tries a man's temper more than aught else. No, no, Enguerrand, this cannot again be thought of. It is a means to which our necessities, God wot, not our inclinations, have forced us to resort but too often already, and it had well-nigh been attended last time with too serious consequences to be renewed so soon—if, indeed, at all."

"If the Flemings would but pay their imposts," observed Marigni, with a deep sigh.

"Ay, had we but money to bear us on to a fair field, we would soon force the payment," said the king, with emphasis.

"There are the Jews, indeed," suggested Marigni, with a thoughtful air—"they are a never-failing resource."

"What! would you have me recal them now?" exclaimed the king. "Why a year has not yet elapsed since we fined, confiscated, and exiled them—what would the people say?"

"True, sire, and what is worse, they were so well bled on that occasion, that it is much to be feared they are not in a condition to avail themselves of the gracious permission to return, even were you disposed to grant it on moderate terms."

"The thing is not to be thought of," said the king, repressing a slight

sigh.

"Some few have, indeed, tarried under pretence of being converted to Christianity," persisted the minister; "isolated instances, it is true, but possessors of great wealth—these stores might be got at, proving of course their relapse into infidelity, which would be no hard matter with the aid of a few thumbscrews."

"Possibly—but that would avail nothing," replied the king, "and might bring on a quarrel with the clergy, for a consideration too trifling to deserve the trouble. What is private property in the balance of such

wants as ours?"

"A temporary and trifling relief, certainly, but still a relief," said the minister, a greedy twinkle brightening up his eyes—" of course short—

immensely short of the present necessities.'

"And those of the future, Enguerrand—those of the future?" exclaimed the king, impatiently. "Speak the truth at once, man! God wot, you never propounded a difficulty on a Saturday, and I relieved it on a Sunday, but you were again on a Monday standing before me as down-cast and needy as ever! I have mulcted the Flemings, the Jews, my own people—altered the currency over and over again, confiscated rebel vassals, laid fines and tenths on the Church itself, despite Pope and council—all these moneys have I thrown into the royal coffers, yet are they empty! Enguerrand, Enguerrand—you have charge of these treasures—what have you done with them?"

"Please, sire, to remember the cost of your annual cour plénière, and

of the many wars you have had to support."

"Most of them to obtain those ever-needed-ever-failing moneys!"

observed the king, impatiently.

"Then the splendid fêtes for the late and the present Queen of England's marriages," continued the minister, with a bland, unruffled tone, as if the anger of his prince had so little connexion with his own person that he could by no possible means be affected by it, beyond the

sympathy he might feel for the royal distress.

"Could I give princesses of France to the proud English kings as though they were the scions of a mean house—I who imposed them in the hour of victory, obtained by my policy no less than my arms? Could I suffer the vassal to smile at his lord's poverty?—compel the great Edward of England, who knew how to conquer neighbouring countries and annex them to his crown, to pay homage at the foot of a mean throne, ungilt by any of the accustomed and expected splendours—permit him to scan with his haughty glance the deficiencies of my court—the tears and rents in my mantle of state—could I let him see how difficult it would be for me to take the field again? I would rather have grinded a host of Jews, ere this great shame should have befallen France! Sure am I that every true and loyal man should have laid his last penny at my feet rather than have witnessed it."

The wily minister listened with downcast eyes to the words that escaped the monarch, who spoke in a loud tone, and with flashing eye.

"Then, sire," he resumed in the same calm, deliberate manner as before, when a pause gave him an opportunity of so doing without actually appearing to interrupt the royal effusion—"then came the

christening of the younger princes, the marriages of the elder, and the

coronation of the King of Navarre."

"Yes, my sons have already cost me much, and are likely to cost more. I must soon have the pleasure of knighting them, Enguerranda father's pride is at stake in that—no hand but mine must confer that last and greatest honour."

"I see not how your highness, pressed as you now are, can do it, unless some great expedient be hit upon to extricate you from your pre-

sent difficulties."

"And the cour plénière which I have announced to my barons for

next Allhallow-Eve?"

"The grand officers of the crown may not come to me for the moneys necessary for that occasion. I repeat, sire, I have them not to give even where they have long been due," said Marigni, with a deprecating look, yet positive accents.

"And what are these claims upon us? Are they so very pressing?

Can they not be put off for awhile?"

"Why, there is your highness's own family—the officers of your household-

"And can the latter not manage for a time with what their charges

bring them in?"

- "To a certain extent undoubtedly they can. The grand conteiller of France draws in enough from his rights upon the taverns of the city alone to make him rich; nor is the grand pannetier at a loss to use his privilege with regard to the bakers, or the grand chambrier with the clothiers."
- "Ay, ay, their purses are full enough, I'll be sworn," said Philip, sharply; "and so is yours, Enguerrand, if the truth were known." The king's clear keen eye, clear as crystal and keen as a hawk's, rested on that of the minister, which fell abashed beneath the gaze. "I know that well," he continued, after a moment's pause; "but it is fair that the servants of the state be paid. These, however, by your own showing, may wait. Who, then, are these bold creditors who dare to press so

"The grand master of the Templars is one, sire. He says, nothing but the duty imposed upon him by his situation as head of the Order and

its necessities-

"Jacques Molay!—upon whom I conferred the great honour of allow-

ing him to stand sponsor to my young Robert!"

"It is a tie which death has broken," Enguerrand replied, "and with it, I fear, the little there was of loyalty in his breast. Indeed, to my certain knowledge, he has often since lamented the weakness that led him to deviate on that occasion from one of the rules of his Order, which forbids a Templar to step into any house where a child is just born, or to hold a Christian at the baptismal font."

"Proud vassal!" exclaimed the king, angrily. "Does he forget that the immunities which he and his enjoy, were granted by my fore-

"The Templars acknowledge no vassalage but to the Pope," said Marigni, suffering an expression of mingled regret and indignation to pervade his common-place features. "We have had but too much occasion to perceive this whenever the See of Rome has dared to attack the prerogatives of the French crown. Their arms and their treasures were at the command of the infamous Boniface VIII. Had the Pope carried war into France, instead of France thundering it against the very walls of Rome, your highness would have found powerful, perhaps unconquerable traitors at the very gates of your palace. When have they shown themselves true subjects? When the oriflamme was borne against rebellious Flanders and England, their powerful aid was not tendered—now that the royal treasury is exhausted, theirs is not put at the royal discretion."

"Nay, Enguerrand-Molay covered me with his body at the battle of Mons-and I were not in their debt to-day to so heavy an amount, had

it ever been as you say."

"Heavy enough to refund but a trifle to offer on such an occasion as that of the marriage of the English queen," observed Marigni. "Had they been true, would they have demanded it back? Would they not have made a willing offering at the shrine of royalty of a sum, great to their king, but small to them who have ransacked and pillaged the East? Oh! sire, I judge them by my own heart," and Marigni pressed the spot where that precious part of himself might be supposed to lie.

"Faith, you have need to be attached to our person," said the king, with another of those chilling smiles which gave a peculiar, not to say

sinister expression to his marked countenance.

"I have need," repeated the minister, with emphasis; "I whose whole life has been spent in serving your highness—I who——"

"Well, Marigni, how do you purpose to serve me now? By any pri-

vate loan of your own, perchance?"

The minister winced under the insinuation; but so fugitive was the expression of his embarrassment that even the keen eye of Philip did not detect it.

"You please, sire, to jest with your servant's poverty. I might, indeed, raise a loan in the city, just to cover the more immediate expenses of the winter, but certainly not sufficient to pay off the heavy obligations already contracted."

"Had we but the load of the twelve horses Jacques Molay led into the

Temple on his return from Cyprus-what say you, Marigni?"

As Philip uttered these words, his looks were averted from his interlocutor's countenance, and filled with an intensity of thought that showed how deep lay the wish so lightly spoken. Had it been otherwise, his eye would have met in that of his favourite minister—nay, in his every lineament, an expression of such black malignity as might have induced him to receive his counsel with distrust.

"Then, indeed," replied Marigni, in calm, subdued tones—" were those treasures once in the royal coffers—then, indeed, would every difficulty

vanish."

"Ay—war were then easy—rebellion crushed at a blow, and Paris made gay with pomps and pleasures that would bring our vassal lords more surely within its precincts than duty and allegiance."

"One of those thousand bags, sire, were sufficient to cover all the expenses attendant upon the knighting of my liege princes—nay, permit

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festivities such as chroniclers and trouvères would love to tell of in all times and at every court."

Philip's eye was lighted up with a rare and evanescent ray of pleasure,

which imparted to his noble features a softer grace.

"Flattering images those, Enguerrand—too flattering, alas! You conjure up golden visions betwixt which and me rises a wall of iron—you

forget that, my trusty friend."

"I remember it but too well," said Enguerrand, with a deep sigh.

"A fine levied upon them might, indeed, put your highness in possession of part of their ill-gotten wealth, which proceeds alike from the spoil of the friend and foe, the Christian and the Painim."

"Enguerrand, I owe these Templars but scanty love. Never shall I forget"—Philip drew up his lofty form to its full height—"never shall I forget the haughty reception which I, a crowned king, met with at their hands, when forced to take refuge behind their walls from the fury of my people, and apply for protection to a few monkling warriors. Never shall

I forget the deep humiliation of that hour!"

"Of which they were the guilty cause," said Marigni. "It has since but too clearly transpired that the leaders of that *émeute* were disguised Templars, who artfully spread their seditious discontent among the people. True, they were greater losers by the frequent alteration of the currency than any other of your highness's subjects, but that merely because they had too much to lose, more, far more, than beseems either monk or soldier. Their wealth is that of princes, not of vassals." The minister artfully paused at this climax of his discourse, permitting the last words to ring on the royal ear; then observed in meek accents, "My

zeal, sire, craves pardon for its excess."

"It is on the right side, and in the good cause, Marigni, so it cannot But these proud Templars shall learn a lesson ere my reign be over. Their wealth may be nearer my grasp than they imagine; their pride easier humbled than they dream of. Why, man—why look you so scared? Have we not before now brought England's king to bend the knee, and laid the tiara of Rome at our feet? My predecessors were forced to bow low to the yoke. Robert put away his cousin Bertha to please the Roman pontiff; even Philip Augustus could not resist the anathema launched against him for his private and family affairs. But I, bolder, stronger, claimed my due from that host of shaven crowns, who, deeming themselves safe within their luxurious retreats, sought to deprive me of my dues as a sovereign lord. The thunderbolt of excommunication was hurled at me—I hurled it back again, and the Pope fell before me. His successor is my creature—Clement is my slave! And think they, these short-sighted fools, that their strength can stand before my strength? I tell thee, Enguerrand, my hand shall yet fall heavy upon them!" The king took a few hasty strides through the room, his lofty form seemed loftier, his bright eye more eagle-like, as thought after thought came crowding tumultuously to his brain. "Yes, Enguerrand, they shall feel my hand upon them," he continued, stopping before his pliant minister, and permitting the limb he mentioned to fall heavily on his shoulder. "What is now my kingdom? Begirt with petty sovereigns, whose wealth is not my wealth, whose arms I can command but for a limited time; the hierarchy on all sides, without, within, even at

my very palace gate, raising its thousand threatening heads—a state within the state! It must be the task of a wise policy to make priest and baron bend the neck, or the sceptre were not more worth than a woman's distaff. That great work must slowly progress from father to son, and be a legacy to each king's heir. And how think you now the Templars can be borne? Say, Enguerrand—what are they but a standing army at the beck of Rome? and what may not be achieved by such a power everywhere disseminated in the bosom of every empire, independent of the princes under whose shadow they have grown to such a strength—deep in counsel, able and tried in arms, ever ready to spring into the saddle—strong in unity, in wealth, in daring, with no ties to fetter, no home to claim them?"

"Certainly," replied Marigni, "the Knights Templars are to be

doubted as friends and dreaded as foes."

"And as subjects-what think you of them as subjects, Marigni?"

"As subjects, sire, they are worse than the most turbulent barons," said the minister, with the blunt, straightforward manner he knew his royal master loved well.

The cold smile that spoke his iron will, played for a moment round

Philip's lips.

"So long as they remained in the East," Marigni continued, "it was all very well; there was a hope they might ultimately emigrate altogether into those countries, according to the aim of their association. In France there are no Painims to overcome—no Christian worshippers at the Saviour's tomb to protect-yet shoals of them are crowding in upon us, and holding every stronghold in the land. Their inordinate riches alone, acquired by the disgraceful traffic of prisoners, and by deserting for money the forts and passes it was their duty to defend to the last man, would make their community odious. By such vile means as these have they amassed the gold that well-nigh weighed down the twelve horses your highness speaks of, and was ostentatiously exhibited so as to mock the king's difficulties. Then their tithes-their vast possessions in France itself, are ever-flowing streams of wealth to them. Then, again, every noble brother brings with him a fortune proportionate to the greatness of the house whence he springs; and, whereas the robes of a noble at large, the costly accoutrements and decorations of his squires, trains, and horses, are in themselves a fortune; the simple white woollen cloak, bound with tassels of worsted instead of the rich brooch, permit these Templars to hoard their wealth. Thus have they accumulated riches—thus has jewel been added to jewel, glittering in the dark recess wherein they lie hid; thus has gold been heaped upon gold, and silver upon silver, until the Temple of Solomon was not so filled with treasures and secret stores as this unexplored mine."

In this manner did the wily Marigni pour forth his baneful insinuations into the royal ear; alas, like that of other mortals, but too ready to

drink in whatever ministered to the ruling passion.

The king listened as to some sweet and pleasing strain. The frown of thought that so often clouded his brow was smoothed away, a smile hovered round his well-formed mouth, and his hand, more than once, pushed back the long locks of the Frankish kings, as if anxious to catch

every word. At last an exclamation burst from him, which brought his

subtle counsellor to a sudden pause.

"Yes, they must have undreamt-of stores," he exclaimed—"untold heaps of oriental gold! When I bethink me how, year after year, a goodly set of stalwart knights returned to the Temple, wearied with combat, bearing spoils along with them, and how a brilliant troop of gay young nobles, picked and chosen from among the highest of the realm, went out in turn to come back similarly laden!—how glorious would be the spoils of the spoiler! Enguerrand, minstrels tell us of many golden fruits, but I ne'er before heard of any so tempting."

"Nor so far off, sire."

"Mark me, Enguerrand; nought is far off which Philip wills. Cle-

ment is mine—the future may clear up, even in your quarter."

"And for the present," said the minister, his eyes gleaming with gratified hatred, "I will take such measures as are best calculated to keep all together; and when your highness shall have levied enough from the Templars, then will I gladly prepare for the noble ceremony of knighting my liege and dear lords."

"Yes, Marigni, make both ends meet just now as best you may. The future shall be my care." As the monarch spoke, his meaning-fraught glance met the glistening eye of his favourite. "Now you may leave me."

Philip waved his hand, and Marigni, knowing his master's temper, curtailing the ordinary ceremonials, silently withdrew, with humble mien, until the last fold of his garment had swept by the king's threshold; but scarcely did the heavy curtain drop behind him, when all the placid humility of his manner was at once cast off like a useless mantle, and the eyes were permitted to glitter in their native malignancy, the smile assumed an expression of triumph, the figure was haughtily drawn up, the gestures became imperative, the look scornful, and the whole man, as he passed proudly by the few officers of the household, exhibited the mortal weakness, which courtiers and royal favourites are not the only ones to display, of bowing the head low one instant that they may toss it the higher the next.

VII.

Whilst Enguerrand de Marigni was rejoicing in his secret heart at having struck a mortal blow at those whom he hated, opened a fresh prospect of public as well as private booty, and at having found means of rendering himself more useful than ever to his master by ministering to his darker passions, Philip remained brooding over their recent interview. To the bold views and princely munificence which distinguished this monarch whom Nature had enriched with her choicest gifts, beauty of outward form, vigour of intellect, and, above all, that unflinching firmness without which real greatness is impossible, were allied qualities of another kind, which, like weeds that twine round some glorious flowers and half smother their growth, often predominated over his better impulses.

But his evil passions were in their ascendant during the reverie which succeeded the departure of his minister. His eyes rested on the wood-

land prospect; but the mind saw not that on which the looks mechanically dwelt; nay, so lost was he to all external objects, that a young page stood for some time in the room before he became aware of the intrusion.

"How now!" exclaimed Philip, roused by the slight rustle of the page's plumed bonnet, as he waved it backwards and forwards for that

purpose.

The youth, though belonging to one of the highest houses of the land—being the son of one of those independent counts whose vassalage had occasionally to be riveted afresh by formal hostilities on the part of the king—and though early trained to appear in the presence looked embarrassed as his master turned full upon him; and it was with evident reluctance that he muttered something in a low tone, which, however, did not escape the king.

"An audience-a private audience?" said he; "and for whom?"

The youth's embarrassment did not seem lessened by the question, and he again gave utterance to an almost unintelligible answer.

"A lad!" replied the king; "and pray, who brought him hither?"
"The Roi des Ribauds, an you please, sire; he gave the lad in charge to the pages, saying we must get him speech of your grace."

"The King of the Ribalds takes a strange license upon himself: this

must be looked to."

"So we thought, sire; nor would we stir in the business until the chancellor, happening to pass our way, inquired into the matter; he took the suppliant aside, spoke long and earnestly with him, then bade me mention him to your grace."

"And what seeming may have this strangely introduced personage?"

inquired the king.

"He is a mere stripling, sire-younger than any of us-but he per-

sists boldly in his request, though he seems otherwise very timid."

"Well," said Philip, "since he has succeeded thus far, let him come at once; but, hark ye, boy, let your answers in future be clearer, and your manner more assured, or you'll never have grace to wear your spurs, should you have valour enough to win them."

The abashed youth retired, and the king fell back into the train of

thought from which the page's intrusion had roused him.

"Still other motives must be assigned, since the real ones must ever be kept from those who cannot fathom them," involuntarily escaped his lips in the intensity of his pre-occupation, ere he again became aware that he was not alone.

The shrinking figure that now stood before him betrayed tokens of such overwhelming awe that Philip, who, like all tempers naturally ardent and daring, loved not the signs of these qualities being wanting in others, was about roughly to admonish the youth, when a sudden impulse caused

him to examine his person more closely.

His make was so fragile, and his stature so low, as to betray a very tender age, but for a precocious depth of expression and firmness about the lines of the countenance, delicate as they were, which bespoke a mind ripened by the experience, or at least the intelligence, of maturer years. The glance, too, which he furtively cast at the monarch, when he deemed

his attention engrossed elsewhere because he spoke not, and which instantly fell, with every appearance of deep confusion, before Philip's eye, had been keen and searching. There was something in his timidity that sat not easy upon him—something that looked forced and unnatural.

Philip scanned the graceful though somewhat spare oval of the face; the low, thoughtful brow, and firmly-compressed lips; the downward glance; the clear, olive complexion, from which fear had not driven a soft and brilliant tinting; then glanced at the costume, which was that of a youth of low degree: and when, satisfied by this protracted survey of the young suppliant's person, he broke silence, it was in an encouraging, not a chiding tone.

"And what mighty concern can one like you have with the king?"

said he-"for mighty, I presume, it must be?"

No answer being attempted, and the boy hanging his head even more than before, he continued, in the same tone, "Would you crave of my mercy the reprieve of some criminal from his merited doom? or seek you redress for some injured victim? What, still silent? Then tell thine own errand, child, for I can guess no further."

The lad dropped on one knee before the king, but still remained mute.

"Come, boy, speak if thou hast a tongue, and hast anything to say which beseems thee; if not, go ere worse come of it; for if I discover that thou hast obtained access to me under false pretences, I will make thee smart for it."

The youth looked up, and perceiving that the king was really growing

impatient, recovered his composure with singular alacrity.

"Please you, my liege, I come for no private purpose of my own, but with sentiments of a higher order—devotion to my king and my country.

These alone could give me courage to stand in such presence."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Philip, with a half smile, that had less of bitterness in it than usual; "such sentiments and motives do not often influence lads of thine age, I suspect—or, for that matter, people of any age. How old art thou?"

"Nineteen," faltered the boy, an ingenuous blush overspreading his

face.

The king cast another scrutinising glance at the youth, then somewhat imperiously commanded him to proceed. "And mark me, my little man, I bear no trifling even from children. Speak quickly, clearly, and to the point, or not at all."

The king's sharp accent seemed to dispel, as by enchantment, the last shade of hesitation which still lingered about the strange youth; and casting off a timidity apparently put on for some purpose or other, he fell back into his real character, which was evidently eager and forward.

"What I have to reveal, my liege," he said, "unfortunately involves the safety of two innocent agents of evil, whom even my zeal for what is right—my deep, all-absorbing devotion to my liege's person—ought not to make me overlook. Could I but obtain a promise of mercy for them—a gracious, royal promise to pardon their involuntary errors—my lips were at once unsealed."

"Nogaret was mad to send thee here, boy, to haggle about secrets for

which, supposing them worth having, he might have bid a fair price. We have no time to lose in such fooling, or," he added, with marked emphasis, "with fooling of any kind. So begone, sirrah; trouble us no more, and be glad that thou come off no worse for thy boldness."

"Craving your gracious pardon, my liege, I would not mind even

braving the Knights Templars themselves, but-"

"Ha! the Knights Templars, sayst thou?" exclaimed Philip, for a moment thrown off his guard. "You, my fair boy, are likely enough to know something in that quarter."

"Not I," the lad answered, with a scornful smile; "but, alas! one who is very dear to me is mixed up in their guilt, and I would rather bear every pain, nay, suffer death, than bring harm upon him."

"And in what relation may this mysterious person stand to thee?"

inquired Philip.

"He is my grandfather, sire," said the boy, firmly.

The king, after a thoughtful pause, replied with a careless tone:

"And will nothing less satisfy thee than forgiveness for errors which

it may not beseem me to pardon?"

"Mercy ever beseems a great king," the boy fearlessly retorted. "But happen what may, I must even dare to insist on that point; the chancellor has given me such kind words."

"Well, I will try not to make mine rougher; but hark'ee, boy, throw thyself at once upon my generosity; that, believe me, were thy wisest course. Thou hast now gone too far to recede, and must look to it that thou get clear of the dilemma into which thou hast thrust thyself."

"For myself I dread nothing," answered the lad boldly, raising his flashing eyes to the king's countenance; and seeming to gather additional confidence from what he read there, he continued: "but my heart yearns to follow the dictates of your royal will; the noble King Philip, so terrible in war, so great in peace, could not crush the worm that heedlessly crawls upon his path. My story is soon told. My grandfather, whilst yet in the East, had pecuniary transactions with the Templars, which brought him into very close connexion with them-a connexion, alas! renewed on his return to France. He chances to possess some valuable manuscripts on alchemy. This by some means they discovered; and supposing thereby that he could make gold, by threats too horrible to relate, they forced the feeble old man to enter into an engagement to teach them the unholy art. Believing his life in jeopardy, afraid to attempt what he knew nought of, yet more afraid to brave them by pleading ignorance, he at length gave a reluctant consent, which they hastened to clench by a formal written agreement, obtained by force from a poor young scrivener, compelling my grandfather to sign it. Here, my liege, is the document;" and, thrusting his hand into his vest, he drew forth the deed on which poor Nicholas had been engaged a few nights

The king listened with deep attention, and silently took the instrument tendered him on one knee. Casting a hurried glance over its contents, and rapidly gathering the main points, he stood for a minute lost in thought. Then his eye chancing to light upon the still kneeling boy, he returned the parchment, saying:

"Rise, silly child; you have, in good truth, shielded your grandfather from the evil consequences arising from this nefarious transaction; and you knew that full well, I suspect, when you undertook this adventure.

Rise, and own the truth."

"Since you bid me, sire, I will own the chief, if not the only, motive that has made me so bold in pursuing the aim which I have attained; I would once realise, in this dull and dark earthly pilgrimage, the only dream that has shed light upon it—a light as distant as that of the faintest and highest star in the heavens. I would kneel at my sovereign's feet—hear the tones of his voice, that the sound might, like the melody of an undying harp, ring ever more in the silence of my heart, and once, only once, would I that your royal glance should fall on me and raise me from the humble, lowly thing I was before, to make me great and proud for ever. My dream is accomplished; it matters little now in what manner or how soon I die; I have lived enough."

As the king beheld the impassioned expression that pervaded every feature of the glowing countenance before him, and lighted up the eyes

with a fervid light, he audibly muttered:

"Strange—very strange! And pray, sawst thou never king or prince before?" he inquired, with a scrutinising look, as though he would have turned a leaf or two beyond that thus laid open to his inspection in the mind of his interlocutor.

"Oh! yes-often, and in other lands besides this-in crowds, in processions, the sun shone for me as for the rest of the world-but, like the

eagle, I would soar nigher."

There ensued a pause, during which the king seemed moved from his usual sternness, and a milder light beamed from his eyes as they sought

those of the lad.

"Your language is strange, boy," he said at length, in softer tones than usual, "and your looks are stranger still." Neither belong to the country or the garb you have adopted—nay, start not, your riddle was read from the very first instant my eyes fell on you. You are a maiden, and a pretty one. You need not tremble so much, nor weep either—no harm shall befal you in this palace, I pledge you my royal word on it. But let me hear the whole truth. Where grew so lovely a maid? not in our northern country, I'll be sworn—a warmer sun has embrowned your cheek. Say, pretty one, without fear or disguise—you trust a knight as well as a king—tell me your name and parentage?"

The instant the young girl's sex was revealed, her confusion knew no bounds. She clasped, involuntarily, the cross that hung at her neck, as if to seek courage from its contact, and the king observed the glittering bauble with a well-pleased eye; for the notion that the dark beauty had been brought from the far East by some bold, dissipated Templar, or was, at best, the offspring of one of the then constant and unavoidable mixtures of the Western and Eastern races, had been gradually gaining possession of his mind. She murmured, almost inaudibly, in answer to the

king's repeated question:

"My grandfather's name is Canches."

"Thus much I gathered from the document. Whence came he? When was that cross hung round your neck?"

"A few months back, my liege, when-" A deep blush and a tremulous pause filled up the sentence.

"I understand," said the king, drawing a few paces back. "You are one of those few Jews who became Christians to remain here despite of

our late edict. So, thou and thine are of the accursed race!"

At these words a deeper glow burned the young girl's cheek, and her face was, for a moment, averted to conceal, mayhap, the flashing eye and quivering lip. She pressed her hand against her heart as if to still its painful throbs; after an obvious struggle she replied, in a low tone:

"We are now purified by the Church, and have been mercifully re-

ceived into her bosom."

"It is well," answered Philip, resuming the sharp tone of command which was natural to him, all trace of a softer mood vanishing completely; and as the Jewish maiden stole a furtive glance at the king she could scarcely credit that he had ever looked aught but stern.

"Thou mayst depart, maiden, unless - say, what boon wouldst thou

have of us?"

"None, my liege. I have already obtained all I ever thirsted for;" and crossing her arms upon her breast, and bowing her head with oriental humility, the young girl prepared to depart. She had well-nigh reached the door, when her steps were arrested by one little word that rang like music in her ear.

"Stay," said Philip; and the maiden turned with renewed hope brightening up her face which had been so overcast but a moment before; and as she quietly glided back to her former station her step seemed unearthly, so light was her footfall, and so gentle the motion of her slight

figure.

"If thou wouldst serve the king," said Philip, in a tone less harsh, though by no means soft, "thou wilt mention this interview, or its subject, to no breathing soul. Thy grandfather must continue on the same footing with the Templars as heretofore, and let the chancellor know when and where he may be found. Now thou mayst depart, secure that my eye rests on you both, and that no harm shall befal either."

Again the maiden was about to glide behind the curtain, when once

more a word of recal brought her back to the king.

Another change had come over his countenance. There was something of irresolution in the eye, of uncertainty in the smile hovering round his well-shaped mouth, very unusual to his physiognomy, and impressed it with something startling, like everything which is not in character with

the habitual play of the features.

"And," said Philip in a lower key, as he stooped his tall form towards his diminutive companion, and gazed intently into her keen, intelligent eyes—"and art thou sure thy grandfather knows nought about this same gold-making? Beshrew me, maiden, but that were, after all, the secret best worth knowing to gentle or simple, to Christian lord or to infidel,—nay, for that matter, to the most Christian king that ever wore a crown. Say, maiden, how is it?"

"Alas! my liege, he knows no more about it than the child unborn. Such a secret might well make the humblest proud!—it would give a

home to the friendless, shield the innocent, make the persecuted hopeful. Alas! if such a secret exist, we possess it not."

"The more the pity!" said the king—"it would strengthen the strength of the strong—the greatness of the great. Art sure, maiden, he knows nought of this matter?"

"Were he possessed of such power it would be laid at the feet of your highness; but he is ignorant of aught so contrary to the duties imposed upon him by his new creed—he would not dabble in such matters at all, were it not for his fear of the hot-headed Templars."

"I am glad to hear he is so good a Christian," said the king, with the cold, dubious smile characteristic of his habitual mistrust. "And which of the Templars, maiden, has cast his eye upon thee?"

The young girl covered her face with her fingers, through which tears soon forced their way, whilst her bosom heaved visibly beneath her borrowed vest.

"Nay, I meant not to distress thee," said Philip, bluntly. "Fear nothing for thyself. I pledge thee my royal word thou shalt be safe—it will be for thine own good to tell who has wronged thee."

"No one but my sovereign," replied the girl, spiritedly, as she removed her hands from her tear-bedewed face, and looked proudly and reproachfully at the king.

"Very well, very well," said Philip, good-humouredly. "I shall tell the chancellor to keep an eye upon thy grandfather; and if thou followest faithfully the directions he will give thee, and keepest counsel, it shall not be the worse for either. Above all, see that the Templars be maintained in their error."

The Jewish maiden glided from the presence, and the king was again alone.

"A strange girl, and come on a strange errand! I owe her thanks—but, faugh! the stain is still on her; it was but yesterday she was a vile Jewess. This gear must be looked to, however. I doubt not it is only the wild prank of some foolish boys—not but everything must be seized upon. I will speak to Nogaret presently, and he will inquire into details."

So thought the monarch; but the ordinary routine of his active life left him little leisure to indulge in that peculiar train of ideas, and he soon became engrossed with those daily cares and labours that oppress the great quite as much as the lowly, and which, though they differ in their nature according to the various situations in life, by a wise dispensation press equally on the hearts and the hours of all.

THE FORESTER AND THE MONK.

BY G. W. THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF "BALLADS OF THE NEW WORLD."

FORESTER.

"Dost hear the horn, this merry, merry morn— The merry horn?" quoth he.

"I'd rather track the deer through this leafy covert here, Than the Pope himself I'd be.

I'd rather have this shaft," and the jolly archer laught, "Than a crozier all of gold," quoth he.

"In greenwood I'd rather lie, than pine away and die In the odour of sanctity."

MONK.

"Ere the breaking of the day, thou shouldst stay awhile and pray, For prayer is good and right," quoth he.

FORESTER.

"There's a stag of force broke out, and I hear my fellows shout, And it irketh me the last to be;

I'd rather hear the horn, through a forest riding borne, Than prick song or dull chant," quoth he.

"The dewdrops are my beads, and I count them on the reeds, 'Neath the willows where the wild herns be.

"I hate in murky cell o'er a breviary to spell, While there's forests and there's deer," quoth he.

"I'd as soon eat fish and fast when Lenten tide is past, As leave woodcraft and good venerie."

MONK

"Now out upon thy words, the very forest birds
Are singing loud their lauds," quoth he.

FORESTER.

"I hear my tawny hounds, scarce the leash restrains their bounds—Monk, I reck not of the Litanie.

"Best incense to my view is the bright and scented dew Mounting up to heaven's blue," quoth he.

"When I hear old Sorel neigh, should an angel bid me stay, By St. Barnabas it might not be."

MONK.

"Sharp tusk and pointed horn may revenge me of thy scorn, Thou scurvy, naughty knave," quoth he.

"God grant it come to pass, that a scoffer at the mass May soon lie in deepest jeopardy."

FORESTER.

To his saddle from the ground was but a single bound: "Good father, now farewell," quoth he.

"If I strike wild boar or deer, with shaft or sword or spear, There's a haunch of his good flesh for thee."

2 B 2

THE LAST DAYS OF BURNS.

Burns has, upon the whole, been fortunate in his biographers. Dr. Currie prefixed to the first collected edition of the poet's works a carefully written memoir, which may still be read by those in whose eyes graceful and elegant writing finds favour. Mr. Lockhart's "Life," originally contributed to Constable's Miscellany, and subsequently corrected and enlarged, is so good as to cause regret that the learned and accomplished author should not have again resumed the office of biographer, aided by the research of recent years. In the same hearty and vigorous style with which he had already delineated the lives of British painters, Allan Cunninghame gave the world a Life of Burns, the greatest fault of which consisted in the partisan spirit with which it was executed. Mr. Robert Chambers has devoted all the energy and force of his active mind to the production of what, after making due deduction on the score of some grave errors, we must fairly characterise as the Life of Burns. He has inserted in the order of their production every composition which he deems authentic. He has given us the man Burns "in his habit as he lived." He has conferred a boon upon all true lovers of literary history, and is fairly entitled to our best thanks.

It often happens that the task of keeping watch over the reputation, and defending the fame, of a great author, is performed by those from whom we had no reason to look for such service. Every one must remember how what may be called "the Shakspearian revival" took its origin in the labours of Tieck, and his literary brothers in Germany. This has not, however, been the case with Burns. His "brither Scots' have vied with each other in doing honour to his memory. No one who has ever perused the noble essay of Thomas Carlyle on the subject, can fail to be struck with admiration for the generous spirit in which every portion of it is conceived and executed. Professor Wilson never appeared to greater advantage than when vindicating the character of the peasant-poet from false aspersion in his elaborate dissertation on the "Genius and Character of Burns." In this case the prophet is honoured in his own country; and it is not merely from the fact of his Doric style that he has become a household word in Scotland, but it is rather from the generous-hearted patriotism that breathes out of every page, and

gives zest even to the most fugitive of his verses.

We propose very briefly to avail ourselves of one of the pleasantest privileges of periodical literature, and lead back our readers, with the help of Mr. Chambers, to the "last days of Burns." The niche which Burns occupies in the temple of English literature is all his own. There is no one to dispute his position. There is, therefore, we incline to think, the greater need that his real character should be fully displayed before us—that his virtues and vices should be alike laid open to view—that we may know what manner of man he was, and wherein his true superiority and inferiority lay. The story of his early days has been often told. We imagine, however, that there is a very general impression abroad that Burns was a clever, self-educated peasant, full of impulse and passion, the slave of his desires; often an enemy to institutions and per-

sons-by the majority of his fellow-countrymen deemed sacred and venerable—that he had awakening gleams of reason and piety—that he was spoilt by the foolish flatteries of his admirers, who rewarded him with an occupation unworthy of his genius, and left him to perish in poverty. It has been reserved for Mr. Chambers, in that portion of his work which we think most successful, to exhibit Burns, the boy, the youth, and the ploughman in his true colours. The peasant-poet had a severe ordeal appointed him. His childhood was passed in poverty, exceeding even that of an ordinary Scottish cotter. But the real nobility with which his father sustained every fresh disaster, every new defeat, seems at an early age to have sunk deep into the poet's heart. As long as his father was upon earth, he toiled and worked with an enduring patience, and a fervent zeal perfectly, we believe, without parallel. humble cottage where those early days were passed, its meagre fare, its few pleasures, its genuine and sincere piety, live again for us in the pages of Mr. Chambers. The sister of the poet, still living near the banks of Doon, has freely yielded her recollections of these days. It is pleasant to contemplate the youthful bard in the midst of his family, often cheering them with the humorous productions of his muse, and giving himself heartily and wholly to his duties. Backslidings there were, doubtless; but there is reason to think that these have been exaggerated. Rebellions against authority, we may be assured, were not unfrequent; but the love which the father of the family inspired his sons with, guided the erring son again into the path of duty. The mother acknowledged the failings of Robert, but yet at the same time did justice to the frank avowal of error which had always characterised him. "Often and often," she said, "did we blame him, and often did he mak us a' licht wi' laughing when the day was dune."

Who can fail to recognise in this maternal recollection the warm and buoyant humour which charmed the gay Duchess of Gordon, and endeared Burns to the litterati of Edinburgh? The lesson taught by the recital of these early days will not be thrown away. There are not many Robert Burns' in Scotland, but there are many young men of hot blood, keen nerves, and acute sensibility, to whom the early self-control and endurance of the poet may teach wholesome truths. To struggle against want, to do battle with misfortune, and to preserve amidst all this a firm and undaunted spirit, is as difficult now-a-days as it was in the last days of the eighteenth century, and we cannot believe that the incentive afforded in so pleasant a fashion will be neglected.

Our business lies not with the Edinburgh phase of Burns' existence; those who wish to acquaint themselves with the details of it, must consult the work which has led us to prattle about Burns. There is one scene, however, in which Sir Walter Scott, then a lad of fifteen, figures, and which has lately been brought back to memory by the mention of a somewhat similar anecdote in Cockburn's "Life of Jeffrey," not wholly to be passed over. It is pleasant to reflect that the hero of eighteenth century Scotchmen should have met, though it were only once, with Sir Walter. How often must the thought of the hour when he supplied Burns with a scrap of literary information, have come back upon the famous and fortunate author of "Waverley!" Perhaps, too, in the untoward season of his later days, the reflection that he was not the only

favourite of Scotland who "had seen misfortunes," may have done something towards cheering the desolate hour.

It is December in 1791. Burns has quitted the pleasant farm of Ellisland for a small house in Dumfries. The exchange is in every point of view undesirable. He begins to live a town life, and the life of a small country town is most unfitted for a man of his habits. There were always idlers and loiterers ready to fasten upon a man who had seen the social circles of Edinburgh, and who could charm away an evening as no other man could. Then there were the country lairds anxious to secure him for some merry-makings, where strangers from the south were to assemble, eager to get a glimpse of the untaught genius. The work of an exciseman was not very engrossing. His evenings were generally his own—the taste for tavern parties was strong in Dumfries, and more hours were spent in the society of boon companions than in that of his

patient, trusting wife, and her young children.

About this time the excitement of the French revolution was beginning to have most perceptible effect. The same misguiding star which diverted Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth from the beaten track of employment, and filled them with an enthusiasm for what was, after all, but the phantom of liberty, attracted Burns by its wayward and fitful light. He expressed too open a sympathy with the chiefs of the French nation to suit the taste of some of his friends among the higher orders. Alienation follows, and an increased violence in Burns. He despises those who are swayed by such miserable feelings. He pours forth lampoon after lampoon in severe and relentless revenge. The tavern is more frequently sought by him, and the society of those whose opinions agree with his own more sedulously cultivated. It seems strange too, that during the two first years of his residence at Dumfries, when the political rancour was at the greatest, he should have enriched the language with the choicest of his songs. His engagement to supply his friend Thomson with the proper materials for his collection, is upon the whole rigorously fulfilled; and even when the violence of his politics threatened to draw down the displeasure of the government, he pursues his task, and discharges it most ably. Nothing would tempt him to receive money for these songs. It was a cause, he thought, in which every true-hearted Scot should feel interested. He had no feeling about accepting whatever the sale of his poems brought him. Many persons have expressed wonder at this determination, but the distinction we hold to be a just The songs were the free "outcome" of his mind. They had risen to the heart, and poured themselves forth. They were more the children of his brain than the elaborate and finished productions of his pen. No true man could bear to receive money for his child-Burns could not accept it for his songs.

The professional excursions of Burns brought him into contact with many strange persons and places. Like the gauger in "Guy Mannering," he was often a welcome guest at the tables of country gentlemen; from the acquaintance he enjoyed with several of these, he reaped great benefit. He was reputed merciful in his calling, and there occur many instances of forbearance and gentleness quite unusual. In quiet times there appears to have been great attention given to the education of his sons, and

although his frequent aberrations would have lost him the love and approval of many women, it is on record that his wife declares that his conduct to her, though not altogether blameless, was on the whole tender and affectionate. Life must have passed with him pleasantly in "the seasons of fair weather." The day's labour over, he would often wander with his children by the Nith, repeat psalms and fragments of old songs to them, and endeavour as far as possible to direct their minds in the same manner as his own revered parent had done. But there is another side to the picture. The political and masonic reunions would be succeeded by suppers and drinking bouts-there were bitter days of remorse and grief-there were constant failures in the provision for the wants of the family. Many of the letters written during 1793 and '94 display sad traces of the effects of this mode of life. Petulance and impatience at times bursting out into absolute infidelity, disfigure them; and, indeed, it becomes a grave question how far Mr. Chambers was justified in giving so many of these letters to the public. It is true that they give us the whole mind of the remarkable writer, but still there are limits in cases like this, which, it seems to us, have in some few instances been transgressed.

On the 14th of April, 1796, illness, from which he had been for some days suffering, threatened to prevent Burns from giving attendance at a meeting of Freemasons. He made an effort for the sake of his friends; and we have been told by one of the few persons among his intimates who now survive, that he never was in greater force. Soon after this he was compelled to abandon the graver part of his excise duties. Through the remainder of the month he was in the most miserable state. Some fine days in May revived him; and on the 17th of that month he penned the song "To Jessy," which contains perhaps the

sweetest stanza in his works:

Although thou maun never be mine,
Although even hope is denied;
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing,
Than aught in the world beside—Jessy!

This song was composed in honour of one who had aided and soothed many of his darkest hours. The lady still lives, happy in the recollection of the services she was able to render; happier, perhaps, in having

inspired the beautiful and now world-famous stanzas.

The dreary darkness was coming on. He removed to a farm, commanding a view of the sombre Solway, and there vainly endeavoured to recruit his ruined health. His letters abound in tender expressions of his afflicted state. To Mrs. Riddel, a lady of rare endowments, from whom he had been for some short time estranged, he expressed himself as sorrowful for the many wanton attacks he had inflicted upon persons, who had hardly merited so severe a treatment.

We may imagine how drearily the days went by. The poet mourning over "the days that were no more," in sight of the Solway, at all times a gloomy and darksome frith! His children, his faithful and forgiving wife, how often must they have presented themselves before him! And there must have been, too, thoughts of the fame he had acquired,

dim presages of his future estimation, of the verdict of posterity, of the applause of Scotland. And we trust there were also other thoughts.

We must give, in the words of Mr. Macdiarmid, the following anec-

dote:

"A night or two before Burns left Brow, he drank tea with Mrs. Craig, widow of the minister of Ruthwell. His altered appearance excited much silent sympathy; and the evening being beautiful, and the sun shining brightly through the casement, Miss Craig—now Mrs. Henry Duncan—was afraid the light might be too much for him, and rose with the view of letting down the window-blinds. Burns immediately guessed what she meant; and, regarding the young lady with a look of great benignity, said, 'Thank you, my dear, for your kind attention; but, oh! let him shine: he will not shine long for me.'

On the 18th of July he returned to Dumfries. His wife, expecting confinement almost hourly, was unable to be with him. But there were not wanting kind friends to assuage his sorrows. On the 21st he sank into delirium. His eldest son has remembrance of an execration passing his lips against the legal agent who had caused him terrible anxiety in his latter days. Would it had been otherwise! With his children near him he sank into the calm of death, peacefully, and without a groan.

We have availed ourselves liberally of the assistance of Mr. Chambers in putting together this rapid sketch. The introduction of the letters into the body of the work, though of course unavoidable, grows tedious when we are hastening to the close. We trust that in future editions there will be more condensation, and less fine writing. The book only

wants these features to be really excellent.

The mausoleum of Burns rises high above the spires and houses of Dumfries. The traveller from the south, if he have but one drop of Scotch blood in his veins, can hardly view it without emotion. Thoughts will arise of the peasant-bard in his early struggles and subsequent fame, bursting out into renown and social distinction, conquering many difficulties, overcome by many temptations, and dying when he must have felt within him consciousness of strong power, and aspiring after fresh endeavour.

The admirers and lovers of Burns, however, are of all countries, and all ages. His strains rise to the heart when more exalted music fails to charm—when the soothing has more power than the sublime—the pathetic than the tragic. To know the real power, and to test the true influence of this great genius, we must make ourselves acquainted with the daily life and conversation of the man—Robert Burns.

solvening. O'diornam Sided on the well-carry gaps, and fell heavily on

"High air! you are at the morey of no butcher?" exclaimed there-

"I-I-I - T - convet. My-my hip." streethal the positives man in the intensity of his agony. "The Lord have mercy on me. Oh! oh! oh! I've pay a nake, relief! Wile! I have been a sillain-a bullan-

THE WIFE'S AVENGER.

AN IRISH TALE OF THE LAST CENTURY.

By WILLIAM DESMOND, ESQ.

II.

"Away, madame, from this! Do you hear me—away, I say," exclaimed O'Gorman, as rage and fear fearfully racked his frame. "Begone, slave!"

"Never, sir!" said the lady, firmly. "The protection denied by a husband has been vouchsafed to me by a stranger. We leave this room

together."

"Hell and fury!—never!" shrieked the husband; and then added, with a sneer, "Except it be as two dead bodies flung from this window to moulder and rot in yonder moat, or feed the hawks and vultures and beasts of prey."

"You taunt in vain. Guard!" exclaimed Inglefield, drawing his

sword.

"Ah!—ah, villain!—Take thy doom!" that officer added, as the deserter endeavoured to get behind him and strike him down with a heavy bludgeon; but Inglefield was prepared, and, drawing a pistol from his belt, shot the perjurer through the heart. The man gave one loud scream, and springing high in the air, fell backwards a livid corpse.

"Having now sent your caitiff comrade to eternity-guard!" exclaimed

Inglefield, bringing his sword to the "engage."

Both swords crossed. It was a deadly encounter—one to make a bystander's (and that bystander a woman on whose safety, nay, on whose life depended the issue) blood run as frozen liquid. O'Gorman required in bravery Inglefield required in science. It was an exciting contest; such a one that, was not certain death—the hurling a soul unshriven before its Maker—to one or the other the sure and inevitable doom-must have aroused the feelings of the most lethargic and indifferent into anxiety for the result! Inglefield parried the point of the enraged husband, and, cutting at his head, inflicted a severe wound down his cheek, but thus, unfortunately, leaving his right side unguarded. O'Gorman pointed for the officer's lung; the blade, glancing off from his ribs, cut deeply into his right side. Both combatants now became roused into a frenzy of rage and madness. Inglefield slashed again at his opponent's head, and thereby, leaving his chest exposed, must have fell a victim to the lunge of his adversary, had not the blood from the dead man on the ground oozed from the pistol wound, and ran trickling along the highly-polished oaken boards. Lunging towards his adversary, O'Gorman slided on the weltering gore, and fell heavily on the floor.

"Rise, sir! you are at the mercy of no butcher!" exclaimed Ingle-field.

"I—I—I—cannot. My—my hip," screeched the prostrate man in the intensity of his agony. "The Lord have mercy on me! Oh! oh! oh! For pity's sake, relief! Wife! I have been a villain—a ruffian—

agony.

a—a—for mercy's sake let me not rot—die—oh! oh! Wife—woman dear. Dear—dear Clara—surely all is not forgot? You have some little sympathy—some little love—brute though I have been towards you—for the man you have sworn at the altar of your God to obey? Yes, dear!—press me not so closely, for I am in agony!"

The wife knelt by his side, kissed his parched lips, and wiped the heavy gouts of blood and perspiration from his face. So swiftly is the

injury done to woman forgot by woman herself!

"You—you cannot help me; he—he can," said the husband, in excruciating pain.

"Yes! I see your hip is out of joint," said Inglefield, coldly.

"And surely, sir, common humanity will dictate to your affording any assistance—at least any you are able?" said the woman, anxiously.

"Our calling gives us a little light into the mystery of leechcraft, certainly," replied Inglefield; "and for myself I am no mean chirurgeon—at least amongst amateurs. Your husband's hip is dislocated; I will relieve him on one condition."

"Name it, sir," said the lady.

"You are already sufficiently aware of my sincere attachment to one girl—the sole idol of my existence—to believe me capable of any base or sinister endeavour against your virtue or honour, madam," said the officer; "I shall, therefore, only afford the assistance I am able to your husband, upon one condition—that he permits me to afford you my protection to a safe asylum."

"Take her and be- !" exclaimed the man, gnashing his teeth with

"Hush! Finish not the sentence, sir," said the wife, proudly. "Ere five minutes had elapsed no power on earth would have tempted me to have deserted you. Your last brutal half-finished sentence has determined my course. Do your bidding, Captain Inglefield, and afford the relief that lies within your power to the poor suffering mortal at your feet; after that, lay him on that bed, and we leave him; but ere the morning dawns our country leech shall visit his sick couch, be assured of that, sir,husband no longer. For myself, I am a Catholic; I am weary of the baseness and ingratitude of man, the hollowness and hypocrisy of the world, and will devote my few remaining years to the precepts and mandates of our holy Mother Church. I will crave your protection to Galway, captain, and there will offer up myself a living sacrifice to our belief," said the lady, with enthusiasm; and then added, silently though solemnly, "few will recognise the once fair Clara in the shorn, sombreattired Sister Anne of the convent, I feel certain. Before, however, we leave this hateful prison-house, I have one deed to execute-I will conse-

Inglefield raised the suffering man on the pallet, and with a powerful wrench pulled the disjointed limb into its appointed place. He applied a cooling lotion, which he happened to carry in his valise, and then bound up the leg with strong bandages torn by shreds from the sheets. He rubbed some friar's balsam on the wounded cheek, and then mixed a soothing drink for the patient, the efficacy and quieting properties of which have been entirely lost to the children of the faculty of this genera-

"It believes, madame, a good general not only to be supplied with a good and well-disciplined army, but a good commissariat, and yet again good hospital stores," said Inglefield. "Your husband will shortly be in the enjoyment of a calm and soothing sleep, and no danger need be feared for the next four hours, by which time, I doubt not, your village surgeon will have arrived. We will now depart, madame."

"Farewell, husband," said the woman, bending over him tenderly -" farewell. Not one word? Say at least we part friends-say-

"Never, woman! I loathe you as a worm, as—as—a reptile. I have your past—past—yes—yes, we part, but I—— Oh! hell alone knows the inveterate hate I bear towards you. You have been the blight, the curse, the stumbling-block of my existence! Begone, woman, begone! May your paramour meet the doom of—of——"

"Good-by, sir," said the wife, gulping down her severe sorrow-"good-by. We part, sir, and for ever; may Heaven soften your heart ere you die, is your wife's last prayer. And now, sir," turning to Inglefield, and placing her arm in his, "I am ready. Farewell earth! oh, welcome heaven!

"In five minutes my horse will be at the door. I fear much your ride

will be an unpleasant one."

"In fifteen minutes I will be ready," said the lady. "Henceforward I am divorced from man, and wed to Heaven and her Church! To obtain that eternal happiness I must suffer much persecution, many hardships, many trials, and even much contumely; but for that I-

"Faugh! madame. The buffoonery of designing men!"

"Hush, sir! You are my saviour, my preserver," said the lady, kneeling and kissing the officer's hands. "Wound not my religious feelings. Let each reach the haven of our promised bliss as their own conscience best dictates. In fifteen minutes I will be at the front door. Farewell!"

"Fifteen minutes! Gadszooks! it only takes three to bridle up Sir Mark," mused the officer. "I wonder what has become of that smug-

gler? I will go and see."

Although one death and one painful agony lay on his head-honourably, no doubt-yet so predominating was the exuberance of his natural spirits, that, seeing the sailor lay insensible, from the effects of whisky, on the ground in the dining-room, Inglefield whiled away the fifteen minutes by tattooing most grotesquely the face of the drunkard with different lines by the aid of a burnt piece of cork, burnt his hair into a "crop," and having stuck a coal into his lips to suck, departed for the

In fifteen minutes the lady was ready, attired in a long riding-habit. Inglefield having mounted, lifted her on to the saddle before him, and

set off to (which they reached in safety) the town of Galway.

"Good-by, Captain Inglefield-for ever!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Gorman, as they parted at the convent gate. "Once within those portals, I renounce the world, its trials, its pomps and sorrows, and devote myself to my God and my religion. Farewell, my saviour! Gratify the last earthly behest of a poor, much persecuted woman. Deliver that packet in safety to my sister."

"You may depend upon me. On the honour of my chivalry it shall be done. Farewell, madame, for ever!" said the officer, feelingly; and striking spurs into his charger, cantered fast to his barracks.

III.

It was a lovely fine evening in May, some five years after the events we have just narrated, that the same officer rode along the same hot dusty road, and drawing up close to a babbling stream, shaded by a fir plantation, dismounted, and throwing his helmet on the ground, mused, with arms crossed, as the light zephyr cooled his fevered, anxious brain.

"She will come, surely!" he muttered, "after so long an absence. Dear girl! she will be changed, perhaps, yet never in heart. Hush! I hear footsteps approach."

As Captain Inglefield thus soliloquised, a young and beautiful girl approached, and making towards him, as a deep blush suffused her cheeks, and intense delight sparkled from her soft blue eyes, she clasped both his hands in hers, and exclaimed:

"Ah, Charles! how glad—truly, sincerely glad—I am to see you!"
"Affectionately, too, I hope, Leah," said Inglefield. "I had almost

thought you had forgotten our old trysting-place."

"What a truant your fancy must have been to your heart, then, for I will never believe you really thought anything of the sort," said the girl, smiling kindly. "You have been well—a little perhaps more bronzed than since last we met; and that white scar—some foolhardiness, eh?"

"Well, well, well, if truth must be told, leading a forlorn hope, Leah, to gain a name without reproach, the better to gild hers with whom my day-dream has ever been to link with mine, the *prestige* of which has been the watchword of my deeds of daring and reward. A truce, however, to such badinage. I have news—good news, Leah."

"What, Charles? Do tell me—quick!"
"My father has given his consent——"

" To our union?"

"Yes!" said the officer, clasping the fair girl round her waist, and kissing her sweet pouting lips tenderly. "Nay, more, money—money sufficient in this much despised island of green fields and no taxes of living in plenty; in short, allowing me for your sake—and for your sake only, dear Leah—the power of beating my sword into a plough-share, and, from a soldier of fortune, turning a quiet, domestic, affectionate husband."

IV.

THE church bells are ringing a merry peal; the villagers and peasants flock around the domain; the sun shines with all its splendour, lighting up the calm scene of hills, dales, rich green pastures, and waving woodlands that break in upon the view, until all nature seemed to sympathise, to rejoice, and to accord to the nuptial rites of Leah Courtney with Captain Inglefield, on that day to be performed.

"Plaze yer honour," said an old domestic to Inglefield, "the gossoon has jist been after coming from the post, and brought this quare-looking

bit of a lhetter for yer honour. Faix! and it may be a writ."

"Nay, nay, good Cornelius; I have little fear of such," said Ingle-field. "Ah!—what is this?"

"What, Charles? Read quick. What is it? Confide all to her who is henceforward to comfort thee in tribulation, and rejoice with thee

in prosperity."

"Fear not, and calm thy little fluttering heart, Leah, or I shall become superstitious, as we soldiers oft are, and believe thy fears prognosticate some evil omen. You have often heard my adventures in these parts some five years ago—have you not? Well, then, now listen;" and he read:

"SIR,—You once saved my life; to you I owe a debt of gratitude that I feel no money will repay. I enclose you bank-post bills to the amount of five thousand pounds, which sum I desire may be settled on your eldest daughter—should Heaven, in its mercy, vouchsafe you such a blessing. May your wedded fate be a happier one than that of your grateful but sorrow-stricken "Sœur Anne.

"I am well in health, yet far, far away from the scenes of my misery—in a foreign land; it will, therefore, be only folly in you to attempt to

return the legacy of one dead to the world .- A."

V.

FIVE years have again rolled onwards into that mighty gulf of eternity, and a pretty, lisping child raises its sweet lips towards her father's as he strides towards the hall-door, where a powerful, well-turned hunter is led about, waiting for his coming, and says, childishly,

"Oh, make haste home, pa!-will you? Do, that's a dear papa!-

oh, do !"

"Yes, yes, yes, darling!" exclaimed Inglefield, as, vaulting into the

saddle, he canters off to the deer-chase.

The deer was soon found, and "the scent breast high," as our modern Nimrods would write in *Bell's Life*, when, passing through a small plantation, although the stag had been seen out of it, the hounds came to a sudden check.

"Whatever are the hounds about?" screamed Inglefield, annoyed (as only sportsmen in the ecstasy of a good run can feel at a check), and adding—sad to relate, as he was a father and a husband—a loud oath.

Two or three of the hunters rushed into the wood to discover the cause, whence they emerged in a moment, pale, trembling, terrified, with hair standing on end.

"Oh, holy mother—Mary! save us!" exclaimed one, dropping on his knees in the field, and beginning to tell the beads of his hunting-whip's

lash.

"Oh, mercy of Heaven!" said another, dropping by his side, and making

a sign across his forehead and breast, "more power to meself."

"What means this mummery?" exclaimed Inglefield, with another oath, though he had promised Leah over and over again to cure himself of this bad habit he had acquired in the camp. "You are above such foolery, James," he continued to an English servant who had just ridden up; "see what has caused these worthies' antics, and flog the hounds for-rard."

The servant dismounted and entered the cover, but returned as pale and frightened as the other two, and in nervous tones told his master of two corpses lying there, which the eagles and foxes had already begun to prey on. Inglefield entered the wood likewise, and there beheld O'Gorman and the smuggler, with clenched fists and distorted features, telling of the extreme agony of death, lying side by side, stiff, stark, revolting corpses, stabbed by a knife in twenty places.

VI.

As all this latter part of our tale has now passed into history, we shall sum up briefly. It appeared, a miser of known wealth, who despised the security of banks, funds, or mortgages, and loved to have his many shining hordes collected in chests and bags in his own house, where he could gloat over his earthly treasures as some Eastern emir over the sight of his harem, resided without any domestics in an isolated castle, and that the smuggler and O'Gorman, who had now sank to the very bottom of the pit of infamy, determined upon an attack on the castle, the murder of the old man, and the appropriation of the poor victim's wealth to their own vice

and debauchery.

Seven men, to make assurance doubly sure, were let into the project, though the smuggler and O'Gorman devised another scheme within their first, namely, to adjourn the division of the spoil for some hours, to propose a carouse, stupify their accomplices with liquor, and while in this state they (O'Gorman and the smuggler) were to make good their escape to America. How their plans were frustrated is also matter of history. The miser was a singularly tall and powerful man, and although only armed with a carving-knife, he succeeded in killing his seven assailants, and so wounding the smuggler and O'Gorman, that, feeble and dying from loss of blood, they escaped from the castle and crawled to a neighbouring thicket, where, in the most excruciating agony, they ended their worthless, vicious lives. The miser was made a baronet immediately after for his bravery and conduct, all which is duly chronicled in the annals of our Baronetage.

Inglefield soon after left those parts, and, inheriting a large property in the north of England, went to settle in Yorkshire, where, during some of the long winter evenings, he whiled away an idle hour by jotting down these startling reminiscences in his chequered life, with a hope that they might amuse, if not instruct, any member of his family into whose hands they might fall. With a similar wish, then, we, kind reader, must bid you adieu, hoping that that great family, the world, may find in this tale the same amusement, if not instruction, as did the kith and kindred of

that gallant officer, Captain Inglefield.

THE MARCH FOR RUSSIA.

BY NICHOLAS MICHELL.

MORN, with a laugh, danced down the Eastern height, And flung from rosy fingers gems of light, Sent gales to rob perfume from bank and bower, Freshened the grass, and woke the sleeping flower. The wood-leaves whispered soft as lovers' sighs, The night-drops, sparkling, glanced like million eyes; The dainty bee the wild thyme winged about, As humming spells to draw its virtues out; The lark flew up, like prayer, to heaven's gemmed gate ; The thrush below, sang language to her mate, And waves, like rose-leaves curling, kissed the shore, And, chid by ruffled pebbles, kissed the more. Each sight, each sound, spoke joy and freshness there; Nature still bounds in youth, her face is fair, Unmarked by ruin, darkness, or distress, Till man, the intruder, dims her loveliness; And, yielding to harsh passion's blind control, Casts on her light the shadow of his soul.

They come, the Gallic host—a countless crowd—With trampling horse, and bugle echoing loud;
Their long, long lines in dazzling order march,
Aloft each banner waves—a rainbow arch;
In morn's quick beam the groves of lances flash,
O'er mead, through rill, th' impetuous horsemen dash:
The rock sends back the roll of many a drum,
Squadron on squadron pours, and still they come.
Where now the flower, the stream, the bird of heaven?
Laid low in dust, polluted, terror-driven;
The industrial bee no more her labour plies,
Earth blooms in front, behind a desert lies,
And on and on, the human billows roll,
Pride on each brow, and fire in every soul.

That mighty chief, who, with war's flag unfurled, Down trampled thrones, and grasped in thought a world, Napoleon northward leads this vast array, Burning for glory, confident as gay; No gloomy dreams hope's sunny hours disturb, Their hearts all bounding as the steeds they curb; They might not see, above them hovering there, Grim, fleshless death—the spectre of Despair, Waiting to launch the fatal dart, and grasp The soul, now joyous, in their icy clasp. Exult, great warrior! view thy host with pride, Power beckoning on, Aggression by thy side; The grandest stake for which e'er gambler threw Is ventured now; gay soldiers! bid adieu To hills, and flowery vales, and happier skies, That never more may bless your hope-bright eyes; Starvation, slaughter, numbing frost, must be Your valour's meed, the fate you may not flee; But reck not-raise your cheer-your clarions blow, March, soldiers! march! and burn to front your foe; Lay countries waste !-- so heroes win their fame-Mow nations down!—'tis war's tremendous game.

THE QUEEN'S LETTER.

AN EPISODE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

III.

Unfortunately the young woman did not possess the same confidence and strength as her protector: her limbs gave way beneath her, and she could scarce proceed, and yet the rapidity of their flight could be the only safeguard against the return of danger. In fact, Panotet had commenced his pursuit as soon as Emile turned his back. At this moment a man laid his hand gently on Panotet's shoulder, and said to him, with an air of mysterious authority,

"I've something to say to you."

It was the same man who had appeared a few moments before to take such a lively pleasure in contemplating the dance, and whose face had produced on the Unknown the effect of a Medusa's head.

Panotet fixed his eyes on the countenance of the procureur we have described, and when he had persuaded himself he could not recognise the

face, he contented himself with answering,

"Speak, but speak quickly, for I'm in a hurry."

The man then said in a lower tone, "Do you want to earn twenty-four

francs to-night?"

"All the same," said Panotet, whose stomach, empty since mid-day, suggested to him that a good supper was not to be despised. "But let's hear what I must do to earn the twenty-four francs you offer me?"

"I'll tell you," the man said, drawing the gamin gently a few paces from his companions. "Listen," he then said to him; "you are wrong in pursuing the woman before you so openly and loudly: follow her, but in the shade; dog her steps, without showing yourself or being heard; if she stops, stop too; if she enters a house, do your best to enter after her; if a door of a room is opened to admit her, try your utmost to enter the room with her; and when you have learned why this woman wears a dress tonight which is not her usual one, why she has exposed herself so late, and all alone in a hired carriage—why, in short, she seems to fear being recognised, and, as it were, being caught in the fact—then get away as quickly as you can by the door or the window, the cellar or the garret, come and tell me all you have found out, all you have heard, and you will receive not twenty, but forty francs. Does this suit you—have you understood me?"

During the whole of this hurried address Panotet shook his head with

a doubtful air, and, we might say, anticipated remorse.

"I understood," he answered, "but it is not all right. Supper is good; but to be a spy is bad. Up to the present, I have acted and spoken in the name of all the World—I represented the Nation; and when a man represents the Nation, as M. de Robespierre truly says, he may do anything without being criminal; even play the spy on aristocrats, denounce or even slay them if the public good demands it; but watch a female, even though she is an aristocrat in disguise, for the profit of a private party—no, thank ye, I can't earn my bread that way. Poor, but honest, is my motto, as M. de Robespierre says, each time he mounts the

tribune. But let's come to an understanding," Panotet added, who, while making a display of his political probity, desired to find some way of reconciling his rigorous conscience and the increasing demands of his stomach. "For what end do you wish to know the proceedings of the woman walking in front of us? Do you act for the sake of personal or public interest?"

Panotet in speaking thus exposed his flank to temptation; the tempter

did not allow the opportunity to escape.

"How can you ask me such a question?" he said, in a severe tone. "Monsieur de Robespierre is my friend, and this will prove to you that the public welfare can alone inspire my resolution. The woman I bid you follow, and whose conduct you must watch, is a great lady in disguise, I am certain. I know her, and that she is at the head of a conspiracy against the people. We together, if you will second me, can discover the secrets of this plot, and we two can save our country."

"Save our country!" Panotet cried, with sincere enthusiasm. "I would throw myself in the fire to do so. And you will give me forty francs in the bargain," he added, in a more cautious tone. "Where shall

I meet you?"

"In the Marché St. Honoré, in an hour."

"Agreed on," said Panotet, proud and happy at having reconciled his stomach and his conscience. With the assurance of a skilful tactician, who embraces at a glance his whole plan of action, he then rejoined the small troop of patriots who, till now, had been willing to attach themselves to his inspirations and follow his fortunes.

The dialogue we have just given had lasted a few moments, but so slowly did the carpenter and his companion advance, that they might be seen at intervals in the gloom of twilight, when the fluctuations of the

mob disclosed them to view.

"Keep following them," Panotet said to his acolytes, as he pointed with his finger to the pair, "but at a distance, and without hallooing; the affair is more serious than we imagined. I am off to my post; we will meet again this evening at the Canonier Couronné, and sup together. I'll stand the feed."

In thus regulating the movements of his pioneering column, Panotet acted like the intelligent gamin he really was. "While I'm creeping along near the houses," he said to himself, "it may happen that I lose sight of my two bolters. Well, then, while I've got my eye off them, if they were to turn back, and go up the street, while I'm going down it, why my rear guard will be there to bar their passage; in this way they will be stopped, sold, and forced to give in—the victory will be ours, and our country saved!"

After having thus arranged his plan of battle, Panotet set out with the double ardour of a patriotism that had been tried, and an appetite that required to be so. With his shoulders well forward, and his elbows glued to his side, he crept along, at one moment stopping and flattening himself against the wall when he fancied himself too near those whose traces he was following; at another, leaping like a greyhound when he had lost

ground, and wished to regain his distance.

While the beardless Jacobin was thus commencing the series of marches and countermarches he meditated, the Unknown and her guide ex-

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changed in a low voice a few words, which, instead of explaining their

respective situations, only rendered the mystery deeper.

"Take courage, madame," the workman said, as he cast a glance, part of admiration, part of pity, on the young female. "As long as I am at your side no harm will happen you, and I will not leave you till we have reached your abode."

"But, sir, I am not going home," the Unknown said, after some hesi-

tation, and letting her eyes fall with an air of embarrassment.

"Ah!" the workman remarked, not without feeling an instinctive pang of growing jealousy. "Well, what matters it! wherever you are going I will accompany you to your destination; but try to walk a little quicker," he added, as he turned and looked round; "our enemies are beginning to gain ground."

The Unknown seemed to reject this invitation by moving still more

slowly.

"Monsieur," she added, after a moment's hesitation, "I am in a very embarrassing position, and I am afraid of passing for an ungrateful person in explaining it to you. Believe me, sir, that I do not distrust your honour, and that in refusing to accept your services any longer I am compelled to obey a rigorous necessity. You cannot accompany me to my destination—that is what I hesitated to say to you."

"Ah!" the workman remarked, "you do not wish me to know the person you are going to visit at so late an hour, and under such singular circumstances. You are right, the man who has defended you against

insult might betray your secret; adieu, madame."

The pioneering corps, whose general Panotet had constituted himself, however, had been gaining ground for a few moments, and, spite of the express orders of their leader, had recommenced shouting his war-cry: "Down with the Aristos."

"Listen," the workman continued, as he again placed the Unknown's arm beneath his own. "Your position is really embarrassing, and I only know one way of escaping."

"What is that?" the young woman asked.

"But I entreat you," the workman continued, "to accept the proposition I am going to make you for what it really is, neither more nor less; if you cannot place confidence in me—if you do not believe me to be an honest man—I will be silent."

"Speak."

"Do you not feel that the air is damp, and that the sky is covered with clouds: it will soon rain, and you know that a drop of rain is sufficient to scatter a popular mutiny. Have the courage to come to my lodgings, madame, and when the storm has swept the streets, then you will be able to go out alone—you will have no need of my protection."

Spite of the honest shape the workman had given to his proposition, although it was rigorously logical, the Unknown could not accept it

without a struggle.

"I at your lodgings!" she murmured; "it is impossible."

At this moment a fresh and still more furious hurra made the Unknown tremble. Taking, or pretending to take, this mark of disordered fear for an assent, the workman dragged his companion rapidly along, passed a

dozen houses, and hurried with her into a dark court, and closed the door quickly after him.

In acting thus the workman had no idea that he was shutting the enemy up in the fortress; that is to say, our friend Panotet, who at this

moment was hiding beneath the stairs.

It happened in this way: after contenting himself for some time with following the track of the workman, the gamin had come to the determination of passing him and keeping before him. This resolution, we will proceed to show, evinced a consummate logician and tactician.

Panotet knew where Emile lived, and said to himself:

"One of two things is certain: either my youth will take his friend to his own home, or else to some other place (the dilemma was perfect); if he takes her to his own home it would be all very fine my following them, for I should get up just in time to have the door shut in my face, and that would be a sell; if he takes her elsewhere, he must pass before his house; by posting myself in this court I shall see him pass, and be at liberty to follow him."

The event, as we see, justified Panotet's preventions; and so, while cribbed and confined in his corner, he sung inwardly a pæan for victory, and rubbed his hands, as he murmured triumphantly to himself, "Now

we shall see something funny."

The staircase of the house inhabited by the workman was as dark as the court.

"Give me your hand," the young man said to his companion; "and when you have placed your foot on the first stair, take hold of the banis-

ters, but do not loose my hand."

In fact, all these precautions were not superfluous. Besides the inconvenience of its shape, the staircase had others resulting from its antiquity. Some of the steps shook when the foot was placed on them, and the banisters trembled each time that a too vigorous grasp tried their solidity. When the Unknown and her protector had reached the first landing, Panotet quitted his niche, and mounted in his turn, as he held his breath. When he had arrived at the fifth story, Emile stopped upon the landing, and drew a key from his pocket which he inserted in the lock. Panotet had drawn so close to the Unknown as to fee! her dress; he possibly hoped that, at the moment they entered the room, he might be able to slip in behind her without being perceived; but spite his agility and audacity, his hopes were this time disappointed. The door opened for an instant, was re-closed so quickly, that he rested before it with his mouth wide open and his nose nearly flattened. Then, swallowing his disappointment, he slid down to the ground, leant his back against the wall, and in this position made up his mind to wait.

The workman's lodging consisted of a single room, divided into two compartments by means of a glass screen. The first of these two compartments served at the same time for dining-room, saloon, and study; the second was the bedroom. It was into the first that the workman introduced the Unknown. The darkness was almost as complete as on the staircase without; the sky continued to grow darker, and threw its dark shadows on the windows. It was, besides, nearly nine o'clock, and

night was taking the place of twilight.

"Sit down, madame," the workman said, pushing a chair towards the young female; "don't be afraid; we shall soon be able to look one

another in the face."

While Emile was busied in striking a light, the young woman felt a vague terror oppress her. This chamber, which seemed to her like a den, when the proprietor had taken care to withdraw the key after entering—the idea of being alone with a man she did not know—even the noise of the flint and steel and the sparks which glittered in the darkness—all this shook her courage and disturbed her reason.

As soon as Emile had lighted a candle, his look fell on the young woman, who, in her terror, had doubtlessly foreboded some menacing spectacle, for she was paler than she had before been. The light, however, only brought to view the more than modest details of a workman's

lodging.

The furniture consisted of four chairs, besides the round table placed near the window, and a plain commode, which the young workman had himself made. The two sole objects which had any peculiar meaning were a small bookcase, containing some twenty volumes, and a bust of Jean Jacques Rousseau. These two things indicated certain studious habits, and explained why the workman had in his language more politeness and cultivation than his position warranted. In truth, nearly every evening after returning from labour, Emile sat down before his abridgment of a library, and turned over the twenty volumes by turns of which he was proprietor. From these books he had drawn not merely words, but ideas. Without perfectly understanding the theories of the Genevese philosopher, he had greedily swallowed their substance. Rousseau had taught him that a man's dignity is independent of position, fortune, and profession, and for this reason this intelligent young man, who often had been carried in his day-dreams beyond his sphere, had made Rousseau the object of his worship. Through reading his works, he felt vividly that the old world, old manners, and old prejudices, had no long time to exist, and the epoch of the people's regeneration could not be long delayed. He, like Panotet, was a revolutionary type, but with this difference, that Panotet represented that unreflecting need of movement which only perceives in a revolution a cause for disturbance, while Emile (perhaps the name he bore was also a reason for the sympathy he had devoted to the philosopher of Geneva) represented the intelligence which feels itself humiliated, the labour which revolts against being diverted to the base profit of others—the people, in short, which commenced to gain self-appreciation, and was ready for action. Emile's pride expressed sufficiently well the natural hauteur of a man who feels himself superior to the accidents of life, and takes each day, by strength of labour, a new step in the path of intellectual progress. Far from blushing at his condition, he was almost proud of it; it seemed to him that his superiority grew clearer through contrast. Perhaps, too, in his pride there was something more of memory than of imagination; for had not Rousseau placed the condition of the carpenter above that of all other manual trades? Evidently this man, with his virtues and failings, was rather a noble and pure emanation than a primitive and complete type; he had a model before his eyes; he acted by rule and measure; he was

the incarnation of a literary souvenir, a copy if we will, but still a copy

which, like all good ones, possesses an intrinsic value.

During the whole time that the workman had been walking by the side of the Unknown, he had found no opportunity to examine her beauty. At this moment, when before her, he remarked for the first time the purity of her features, the softness of her hair, the grace of her demeanour, and, above all, the aristocratic whiteness of her hands. For her part, the young female, having partly overcome her fears, cast a furtive glance on Emile's noble and stern countenance; but this double examination produced a contrary effect. While the Unknown's countenance grew gradually calmer, the workman's appeared to become gloomier. They both maintained silence for some time, and the workman was the first to break it.

IV.

"And now, madame," the workman said, in a harsh and almost rude tone to the young female, "permit me to ask you one single question— Is the dress you now wear your usual one? Were not those persons right who denounced you in the street as an aristocrat? Are you, or are you not, a great lady?"

"And why do you ask me this question?" the young female inquired, doing her best to hide a slight tremor; "and if I were a lady of rank,

what would happen-what would you do with me?"

"If you were a great lady," the workman continued, crossing his hands over his chest-" one of those who only distinguish two classes of humanity, the courtier and the valet-if you were an aristocrat, in short, I would say to you, I am a man of the people, and only owe my protection and support to those who belong to the people, like myself. And what should I care if a woman who despises me—scarcely believes me of the same species as herself—is insulted, pursued, and stopped in the street? Let such a person ask her equals to defend her; let her call to her aid the first duke, marquis, or count who passes, and trust to his honour, and place herself under his protection-well and good! As far as I am concerned, I would not insult her, for it is an act of cowardice to insult a woman, whoever she may be, but, on my honour, I would not defend her. That is what I would say if you were an aristocrat; and I would add, while opening the door I closed upon you, Go, madame, and Heaven protect you; I can do nothing more for you. You do not answer, madame," he continued, after waiting in vain for a reply; "you are perhaps astonished at hearing me say such things, for you are beautiful, very beautiful, and I am not one of those who deny the power of beauty. Still, you see, in speaking as I do, that I expose myself to the risk of displeasing you, and changing the little gratitude you may owe me into hatred. Have the boldness to speak the truth like I do, madame."

"You detest the poor people, then, whom you call aristocrats," said the Unknown, avoiding a direct answer to the workman's question; "they

must have done you great injury?"

"Yes, great injury," said the workman, with a sort of dull fury, whose expression terrified his questioner. "Poor people you say? call them rather miserable wretches, who have heaped up the measure of every pos-

sible insolence: thieves who have grown fat at the expense of the people: libertines who have grown old in vice: cowards who protect themselves behind a title to say to the man whom they ruin, whose wife they corrupt, whose daughter they seduce, whose wage they devour, and whose sweat they drink—'You ask me for satisfaction, my friend—nonsense. We are not on equal terms—we have an escutcheon—you have none.' No, no, madame, these persons must not be pitied; they are villains whom the people should chastise, scourge, and trample under foot."

"Ah, sir!" the young woman interrupted him.

This cry of distress produced on the workman the same effect as the president's order in a stormy assembly; he passed his hand across his

forehead as if to dispel the clouds which covered it.

"Pardon me," he said, "you have just heard the man of instinct, the man who remembers too clearly the personal injuries he has received, and the harm that has been done him; the man who desires revenge, who feels a want to pay back affront for affront, blow for blow. I was wrong in letting myself be carried away by a paltry and narrow feeling of resentment, and Heaven is my witness how I strive each day to overcome it. But now be pleased to listen to the intelligent and impartial man, judging of things from a general point of view, and I tell you again, I detest with my whole heart the agents of corruption and the possessors of privileges. I no longer regard them as vicious individuals who must be punished, but as living barriers protecting the abuses of the past, and who must be overthrown to leave free scope for the ameliorations of the future. Such is my opinion of aristocrats, madame, and such my reason for addressing that question to you which I now repeat—Who are you?"

"Nothing that I appear to be," the Unknown said, after a moment's reflection: "an obscure young woman, whom your threats frighten without affecting; but who, though personally uninterested in the matter, protests against the rigour of your judgment. Guard, sir, against that exclusive spirit which is never just. Do you believe that God has divided humanity into two classes, and deprived the one of all virtue for the advantage of the other? Do you believe that His grace does not descend on the cradle of the noble as well as of the poor child? Do you imagine that, in creating the world, He separated good and bad, virtue and vice, and said, 'The last shall be termed noble, the first the people, for ever?'"

"Men are what their position makes them," the workman objected.
Without replying directly to this interruption, the Unknown continued with an increasing warmth, which defied all her efforts to restrain it:

"Oh! do not thus accuse Providence, sir; do not impute to it the monstrous iniquity of creating two worlds within its own world; the one pure, luminous, and disinterested as the rainbow, the other corrupt and dark as hell. Among those whom you devote to execration, I have known many who were good, generous, compassionate, enthusiastic for virtue—worthy, in short, to be like you, workmen, men of the people."

This last phrase contained some irony without doubt, but the Unknown

concealed its sting so cleverly, that Emile did not feel it.

"To sum up in one word all the virtues aristocracy has practised, and all the good it has done," the Unknown continued, with an emotion like that of a pious daughter rendering homage to the memory of a father,

"I will remind you that yesterday a man was still breathing whose life all France revered."

"Yes, yes, the Duke de Penthièvre," the workman murmured, and carried his hand to his cap as a sign of respect while pronouncing this

venerated name. "He was a good gentleman," he added.

"Well then, sir," the Unknown continued, "you see that honourable men of all classes comprehend one another—you have just saluted an aristocrat! Listen, then: I will be frank with you, as you have been so with me. If you really detest all appertaining to aristocracy—if you comprise in your hatred not merely the aristocrats, but all those who love and serve them, I am ready to quit this room, sir, without waiting for you to expel me from it; for I am in the service of a great lady, and I love my mistress. I will go further, sir; I affirm, that if you were acquainted with this lady, you would love and serve her as I do, for she is the best and most amiable of beings. Now, sir, do you insist upon my going?"

"Remain, madame; I can only pity you—but that is from my heart. However illustrious the person be we serve, it is still always a disgrace and misfortune to be a servant. Beautiful as you are, with so soft a voice, such persuasive words, you might at least inspire, if not effect, great things. Ah! why are you in bondage—in fetters? Believe me, madame, break your bonds, resume your independence, and be rather

the wife of a charcoal-burner, than the servant of a princess."

The desire of effecting conversions, which, in politics as well as religion, possesses every neophyte, had gained the mastery over the workman. With Rousseau's assistance, from whom he had literally borrowed his last remark, he was about to continue his oration; but he perceived that the Unknown was no longer listening to him. Satisfied with having tamed the popular monster (as she probably called the workman in her own mind), and no longer having anything to fear on her own part, she again gave way to the disquietude suggested by her situation, and listened, shudderingly, to the vague noises which reached her from the street. While the workman was swallowing a peremptory remark which almost burst from him, she walked gently to the window, which she opened, and after having put her head out for a moment, she drew back in terror, saying,

"My God! they are there still. They are watching for me—waiting for me. That frightful man who recognised me must have paid them

to follow me."

The fact is, that the members of Panotet's band, astonished at the sudden disappearance of their prey, remained in the street, with the expectation that Panotet would soon come and explain the riddle to them.

"Who is this man who saw you? and what do you fear from him?" the workman asked. "Is he your husband, or a jealous lover?"

The young woman did not reply.

"But what have you to fear?" the workman added. "If you are really what you told me, why cannot you go boldly into the street, and tell the persons waiting for you that you are no more an aristocrat than they are, and that, as a daughter of the people, you have a right to walk freely among the people?"

"Certainly, I ought to do so," the Unknown murmured, with an em-

barrassment which might have led to the supposition that, in spite of her

protestations of frankness, she had not exactly spoken the truth.

And where is the woman, however perfect she may be, who hesitates at uttering one of those white lies by means of which she may protect herself? The end justifies the means is the statesman's, the priest's, and—a woman's, maxim.

"Oh, my God!" the Unknown repeated, letting herself sink on a chair with an air of perfect wretchedness, "I shall never reach the place I am sent to; and what will the person imagine who is waiting my return? What she must fear! Oh, how she must count the minutes, the ages that slip away!"

After uttering these words, the young woman remained motionless on her chair, under the effect of some mysterious anxiety. Suddenly she

rose, fixed her beautiful eyes on the workman, and said to him:

"Whatever the principles may be you profess, I am convinced that your honour may be trusted; and if a woman were to say to you, 'I confide in you,' you would not betray her."

"Speak without fear," the workman said, touched by this appeal to his honour; and also (for it is a human weakness) affected by an instinctive

feeling of curiosity.

The Unknown drew a carefully sealed and folded letter from her bosom, and before handing it to the workman, was preparing to give him a few necessary explanations, when a slight knock at the door of the room kept her from speaking. Hurriedly restoring the letter to its hiding-place, she fell back into her chair, murmuring:

"I am lost!"

The workman did not hear these words, distracted as his attention was by the noise outside, and of which he probably could not yet explain the meaning. A second knock, a little louder than the first, followed. This time the workman quickly made up his mind, and addressing the Unknown, while lowering his voice as much as possible, he said to her:

"Be silent, and do not stir."

Then, gently walking to the chimney, he blew out the candle.

Terrified by this sudden transition from light to darkness, the Unknown could not refrain from betraying her emotion by a sort of nervous trembling, followed immediately by these words:

"What are you doing? Do you imagine the light was not seen

from the street?"

The fear expressed by the Unknown was well founded, for she had scarcely ceased speaking, when a voice outside pronounced the words:

"Oh! it is useless for you to put the light out; I know you are at

home."

The voice which uttered these words was a female one, and betrayed a violent emotion. On hearing it, the workman evinced annoyance more than anger—annoyance which might have been translated thus:

" Her again!"

The workman, however, refrained from saying so, and remained near

the chimney, without stirring, and held his breath.

"I tell you, you are at home," the voice continued. "Oh, open the door, Emile! I must see you, must speak to you. I have been seeking you for a fortnight, and for a fortnight you have avoided me. What have I done to offend you?"

The workman still continued silent.

"You will not open the door?" the voice continued, with a rapid transition from the plaintive accent of a suppliant to the angry tone of a woman driven to extremity. "You will not open? Well, then, I will enter in spite of you!"

This threat was accomplished as if by a miracle; a key turned rapidly in the lock, and the door opened before the workman had time to take a

single step.

"Your behaviour is unworthy of an honest girl," the workman said, in a voice trembling with passion, and seeking to distinguish in the shade the person who had entered; "leave the room this minute, if you do not

wish me to despise you for ever. Leave the room, Lucie!"

"Despise me, then," the new-comer said, "for I will not leave, even if you were to strike or trample me beneath your feet. I know the means I have employed are disgraceful; I have entered your room like a thief with a false key, which I have carried about me for the last three days; but, then, do you not compel me to act as I have done? But once again, no! I will not leave the room, and I will know who you have got with you, with whom you were speaking when I put my ear to the keyhole, before I knocked. There is a woman here!" she continued, after a pause; "I am certain of it; and now I understand why, for the last fortnight, my presence, once so dear to you, has become disagreeable. You deceive me, Emile; you love me no longer!"

These last words were choked by a sob.

"I wish to see, and will see this woman you prefer to me," the poor creature continued, quite mad with jealousy; "I will tell her what faith she can put in your promises. Show yourself, madame," she added, as if desired by this appeal to force her invisible rival to reveal herself; "have the courage to speak to me, as I am talking to you, madame. Oh, you will not answer me; well, then! I must look for you in the corner where you keep yourself hidden."

While speaking thus, Lucie stretched out her arms, and moved forward with the intention of commencing her search. The workman tried to seize her hand to stop her, but it escaped him in the dark, and fell

sharply on a shoulder which trembled at the touch.

"Ah, you see, Emile—you see," Lucie continued, as she turned to the side where her faithless friend should have been,—"you see that you are deceiving me. And who is the woman you prefer to me? I will know her; I will see at least if she is handsome."

As the Unknown was still seated, Lucie almost knelt down to bring herself on a level with her supposed rival, but the obscurity was so dense

that the examination produced no result.

"A light, for Heaven's sake!" said Lucie, in a frenzied tone.

"Very well!" the Unknown said, in her turn, quite calmly. "Have the goodness to give us a light, sir, I entreat you (this entreaty was addressed to Emile); and if I had the right of expressing a wish here,

I would add, I desire it, I insist upon it."

The workman had no longer any reason for avoiding a recognition which had been already made on one side. He struck a light for a second time; the darkness was dissipated, and the little room was again illumined.

"MY NOVEL," AND "&c."

The new vein opened by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton in his delightful novel of "The Caxtons," has been followed out in a series of magazine papers, now put together as "My Novel,"* in which the ore seems to become only the more abundant, and, if possible, with still less alloy in it, as further progress is made. The critic may be fairly excused attempting to give an idea of all the varieties of English life presented to us in papers that fill four goodly volumes in small type. Yet these pictures are all of them charming in their truthfulness and colouring, and they attest wonderful nicety of observation in character, and great powers of reflection on the less manifest currents of motives and reasons that influence the little acts of daily life.

Squire Hazeldean, with his resuscitated stocks and petty absolutism; Parson Dale, the very embodiment of Christian charity and clerical simplicity; and Dr. Riccabocca, the sententious misanthropic recluse, three characters to whom we are introduced at the onset, will live, probably, as long as English literature itself. The spirit of our most truly English writers is once more present in the persons here so exquisitely delineated. Mr. Sprott and his donkey help to fill up a picture of olden times to perfection. Addison, Sterne, Goldsmith, Smollett, come, indeed, irresistibly to

our minds, only perfected by a more matured and a purer taste.

We have more of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton himself in the fight between Lenny Fairfield and Randal Leslie, and in the peripatetic journey to London of the pet boy of the village, afterwards the successful literary man, and ultimately the heir to unanticipated rank and distinction. There are, indeed, what was, perhaps, almost unavoidable, great irregularities in a work of so great a length. The first meeting of Lenny Fairfield and of the little orphan girl, Helen Digby, is well told; but is it likely that they could have so travelled and lived together? Burley is also an admirable sketch—the literary man, of power and genius undoubted, but by conduct a great moral and intellectual ruin. What, however, has such a character to do in common with one who is depicted as so silly as to sacrifice all his prospects in life in vain attempts to catch a single perch, which as a boy he had seen in the river Brent, and as an old man he was still endeavouring to decoy with baited hook? So in the same way when old Ricckyboccy, as Squire Hazeldean used to call him, becomes suddenly Alphonso the Good! the good Duke of Servano! we are disagreeably transported from realms of meandering philosophy and pleasant-flowing wisdom to the tinselled melodramatic effects of the most common-place romance.

But still, with these strange inequalities, the admirable pictures of society, as they present themselves in the every-day life of the nineteenth century, as given in these sketches, will ever ensure immense popularity to the work, and that of a more lasting character than to even any of the author's previous productions.

We have Audley Egerton, the statesman-a central figure in the

^{* &}quot;My Novel:" by Pisistratus Caxton; or, Varieties in English Life. 4 vols. William Blackwood and Sons.

story, intended as the type of those men who sink their personal life in a public career-a portrait sketched with the utmost care and nicety of detail, yet in which we find a strange inequality when so grossly and so easily deceived by his protegée, and twice wrecked in his fortunes by a fashionable money-lender. We have Harley L'Estrange, the chivalrous, ardent, yet insouciant fashionable—Pelham redivivus. We have Randal Leslie, the impersonation of intellect without heart; a practical demonstration that knowledge, without morality or religion, is not power—a theme to which the author and "The Caxtons" alike often recur, and upon which we have a sermon as long, if not as pointed, as that put into the mouth of Yorick by Corporal Trim of glorious memory. We have Baron Levy, the fashionable Sybarite and usurer, with a finger in every mystery and villany that is going on, and who, like a vulture on the look-out for carrion, is never present but when some new prodigal is to be ruined, or some new estate to be mortgaged. We have Dr. Morgan, a quack more benevolently absurd than any homeopathist, mesmerist, or hydropathist that has ever fallen within the circle of our acquaintance. We have the renegade Italian, Count di Peschiera, a schemer and a villain, and his fair seductive sister, Beatrice, Madame di Negra, who, with the inevitable incongruity of the author, must fall in love with penniless genius. we have two heroines—the dark, intellectual, fiery Italian, Violante, and the fair, quiet, loving and trusting, but too easily led, Helen—admirable in contrast, graceful in movement, impassioned, devoted, and tender in their affections.

Not one of these inimitable portraitures but would lose by extraction. The true character of each only developes itself with the lapse of time, and with the positions in which they are placed by the progress of events. Conduct, the author justly insists, is fate, and the justice of life, which is true poetic justice, awaits each and all at the end. This, however, not till after many hairbreadth escapes and most severe trials, so skilfully interwoven in plot upon plot, that when at length, mainly by the instrumentality of chivalrous Harley and worthy Parson Dale, the dross is separated from the ore, the guilty denounced, the virtuous rewarded, and all alike are extricated from the meshes of an apparently hopeless entanglement-truly the reader will exclaim, "My Novel" is not only a work of no ordinary ingenuity and individuality, a work of thought, a work of characters, a work full of wise saws and modern instances, a work possessing infinite variety of scenes and combinations; it is also, notwithstanding its passing strange incongruities and inequalities, a work of high art, and it is calculated not only to add to the already brilliant reputation of its author, but to live as long as the language in which it is

Under the little captivating and somewhat affected title of "&c.," Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley—who was often mistaken in America for her great-great-grandmother-in-law, Lady Mary Wortley—babbles away, like a pleasant brook, of lonely caves "with Brummagem firmaments," of distant rivers and world-renowned cataracts; about Carthage, Arabesques, and Marabuts; St. Louis, Orleans, and the yellow fever; the stars, rough roads, and black ghosts, all in a breath. And how that quick flowing,

^{* &}quot;&c." By the Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley. Thomas Bosworth.

rippling, dancing, little aristocratic brook does babble, let it be judged by a specimen or two. "Something about the stars." "When we were at Washington we attended a soirée of the planets (in other words, paid a visit to the handsome observatory). Messrs. Saturn and Neptune were at home, and their remarkably spacious suite of apartments being thrown open as usual, they displayed a most regal magnificence, even in this republican country."

Here is an account of a Tunisian lion at large:

Some years ago, the Bey of Tunis made a regal present to my late friend, Sir Thomas Reade; it was not, however, a snuff-box set round with diamonds, nor a set of the splendid horse-accoutrements of Tunis, nor a ring of the richest jewels, nor an order, nor a sword, nor a seal, nor a miniature. No; it was a lion-a very magnificent, powerful, and stately beast. Sir Thomas not having any regular zoological establishment, was slightly puzzled to know what to do with his mighty cadeau, but lions are not looked upon with quite so much fear and respect in Tunis as in England. Sir Thomas decided on placing the lion, well secured, in the consulate for a short time previous to sending him, I believe, to England, which he thought of doing, and he was placed under the charge of an experienced person, who took care that he should be very strongly incarcerated. One day, however-whether this noble animal was a leonine Hobbs, that is, a pendant to the American Mr. Hobbs, of lock-picking renown in the present day, or whether by some accident or faulty construction of the barrier that secured him, he got free, is not known; but, in short, one day, to the astonishment and horror of his keeper, the majestic lion was discovered perambulating the passages, and inquisitively looking in at the various chambers of the mansion, quite a gentleman at large. The unfortunate terror-stricken guardian rushed into the nearest room, locked himself up, and flying to the window, threw it open, and with his body half out, thundered forth a general invitation to the passers-by to come and participate immediately in the hospitalities of the consulate.

"Come in, good people, I beseech you come and help me; there is a lion

loose in the house!"

But the ungrateful people no sooner received this kind invitation to have the honour of meeting his majesty the king of beasts, than they seemed suddenly to recollect divers prior engagements, and scampered away in all directions; without even sending their compliments and excuses. It was evident they did not relish the idea of the small party so flatteringly proposed to them; and in the mean time a charming concert was beginning to be got up in an impromptu manner by the glorious guest, who was in every sense the great lion of the day. Hark, to that earth-shaking, consulate-battering roar! Lo! he nears the door of the apartment where the miserable dragoman is trembling in every nerve; the door is locked, indeed, but the poor wretch thinks in distraction that if the mighty beast should happen to have a mind to burst it open, he certainly has the body to do it.

It is almost needless to add, that the hirsute intruder was secured without any harm being done. There is an amusing account of the manner of paying visits in Tunis, literally "dropping in" from the roof; as also of Tunisian ladies, who fatten themselves on kuskusu till their huge double-chins hang almost down to the waist. "Imagine those stair-like flights of chins descending in lines of wavy wagging to that waist, which to be in any proportion of pinguidity must be of such a size as would take one a week to walk round it." Another fair Tunisian "seemed like a constellation of feather-beds," and "her eyes appeared buried in vast protuberances of plumpness; and she must have had incessantly a fine prospect of gently-undulating hills of cheeks before her." Of Niagara, concerning which world-wonder it would be supposed dif-

ficult to say anything new, Lady Emmeline rattles on. "The fact is, that cataract becomes, indeed, to all its visitors, like Wordsworth's cataract, 'a passion;' and the least enthusiastic of mortals does it homage in some way with all his soul, from the poet who pens sonnets to its eyebrow, as a fiery lover might, blowing like a furnace, to a tailor who made this note-' Gods! what a place wherein to sponge a coat!' or the anti-teetotaller, lover only of certain combinations of hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon, technically denominated hydrate of oxide of ethyle, vulgarly alcohol, who sighed-'What a cataclysm of brandy it would take to mix with that 'ere conglomeration of water!' " "Some minds," she adds, a little further on, "certainly seem but little awed by this tumbling ocean—" "'Wal, miss! so I see you're a-taking down of them nice Falls,' exclaimed a sable gentleman to my little sketching companion. To speak thus of them was 'taking them down' a little, indeed." We have the "take down" in a frontispiece, Niagara and its mist mingling with cloud and lightning! The spirit of the storm in tremendous conflict with the spirit of the waters.

This is just the book for extracts. We might go on "taking down" pleasant little tit-bits enough to fill many pages, but we must, perforce, content ourselves with adding, that Lady Emmeline speaks in the highest terms of America and the Americans. "Our noble-hearted, wonder-working cousins," she calls them, "in their own gigantic and glorious

country."

THE MYSTERIOUS MARINER.

A TALE OF THE SEA.

By W. Pickersgill, Esq.

(CORNELIUS COLVILLE.)

The criminal who is condemned to expiate the crimes he has committed upon a public scaffold, and who is consigned to his gloomy cell to await the awful but righteous doom that awaits him, experiences, perhaps, less agony of mind from the contemplation of his dreadful and ignominious punishment, than from his overcharged imagination, which has the power to conjure up phantasms that nowhere exist—to people the gloomy void with the most frightful and hideous spectacles—to cause the wavering reason to totter on her throne—the fevered pulse to beat with unwonted rapidity—and the aching eyeballs to glare like those of the maniac.

There are men who have been exposed to the world's anger and its scorn; who have been reviled, buffeted; who have had a full measure of every wrong and affliction heaped upon them; who have died at the stake, upon the scaffold, or the wheel; who have been hunted through the world as though they were less than human, and upon whose name a stain of infamy has been cast, which has only been removed by Time, the great avenger of man's wrongs, who, with steady but tardy wing, has ever been found to minister consolation to the afflicted. Oh! great physician! Oh! venerable father of mankind! Oh! redoubted champion of martyrs of all ages!—to thee alone do we look for justice—to thee alone do we look as the only true source of consolation and hope. It may be

that thy gifts are often posthumous; it may be that the heart of him whom thou befriendest has long ceased to beat, and that his limbs have long lain mouldering in the grave, but his name, rescued by thy protecting hand, survives without spot or blemish. This, indeed, is one source of comfort; but have they who have endured these persecutions no other -is there not something else whereby, in the midst of the severest trials, they have been sustained, and which has enabled them to bear their calamities with fortitude even to the last? There is a principle which neither treachery nor persecution can destroy—there is a principle which neither the scaffold nor the stake can move—there is a principle which neither massive walls nor iron bars can exclude; which holds equally at defiance all the devices and appliances of man, and which only recognises that higher tribunal, before which all men must one day be arraigned, and against whose decrees there is no appeal. This principle (and there is no other that could have sustained them so effectually) has been their solace and their mainstay. Conscious of moral rectitude, and thoroughly persuaded of the truth of the cause for which they have suffered, they have been rendered invulnerable to the persecutions of their assailants.

But woe to the wretch whose heart is corrupt—woe to him who, conscious-stricken by the enormity of his crimes, becomes a prey to the bitterest remorse. A fiend perpetually haunts his footsteps. He is ever present, and effectually drives peace from his heart. He sits by his side in the scene of gaiety and mirth; he is by his bedside during the long and wearisome watches of the night; he is the subject of his dreadful visions; he peoples his dungeon, or any place he may occupy, with the most hideous phantoms. The laws of man may be broken, the deserved punishment may be escaped, but let not the guilty wretch hope to escape this fiend, who will pursue him even unto the death.

How far these remarks apply to this paper, the reader will determine

after a perusal of the following narrative:

On the 18th of January, 1810, we sailed from Havre de Grace, in the Bonnes Sœurs, for ---. This was the second voyage for the vessel, as noble a bark as ever crossed the ocean, and of large measurement. She was built more with a view to the West Indian trade, but a tempting freight having been offered, her owners were induced to send her to her present destination, as the voyage promised to be more lucrative than any other that at that time she could have been sent upon. How far otherwise it proved will be seen by the sequel. It has been ordained by a beneficent Providence that men should not foresee things, and it is an ordination of whose wisdom all must approve, since, if the future lay revealed before our eyes, we should be rendered perpetually miserable. It is true some strange fancies entered my mind when I first went on board the vessel—a thousand doubts and misgivings agitated me. I felt that there was an incubus upon my heart, for which I could assign no reasonable cause, but which, nevertheless, I was incapable of removing. was strange and inexplicable. I had never trodden the deck of a finer and nobler-built vessel; every way seaworthy, every way qualified for prosecuting successfully the voyage upon which she was bound. fellow-seamen were noble, active young fellows, very affable, and very courteous and friendly towards each other. As for the captain, he was everything that I could desire; kind and communicative towards his subordinates, and always anxious to remove any restraint or reserve his presence might occasion. Everything appeared auspicious; the weather was favourable, and there appeared to be every indication of a quick passage. Whence was it, then, that I was oppressed with these gloomy forebodings? whence was it that an insight, as it were, into the future should have been afforded me, and that I should, by some intuitive principle, become cognisant of events still concealed in the womb of time? There is, I fear, no solution to the mystery; but there are many

persons to whom similar presentiments have occurred.

Many of the friends of the vessel's crew and passengers came on board previous to our departure, to take their leave of a sister, a brother, a wife, or a husband, as the case might be, and to wish them a prosperous voyage and a speedy return. They foresaw not, alas! the fearful catastrophe that was to befal that ill-fated vessel—they dreamed not that there was one amongst that crew capable of a crime at which the heart revolts, and the whole frame shudders with horror. They returned to the shore; there was a tear glistening in almost every eye, and a sigh escaped many a pent-up bosom. As the vessel quitted her moorings, with colours and streamers flying in the wind, the crowd on shore cheered us vociferously, and beheld with admiration our stately bark glide majestically through the vast body of waters.

The wind being in our favour, we put as much canvas upon the vessel as she could conveniently carry. There never was a finer craft floated in salt water than she was; and she bounded over the waves with astounding rapidity. There were many outward-bound vessels much lighter laden than ourselves that we soon overtook, and quickly left at an immeasurable distance behind us. She was of a light draught of water, and admirably adapted for quick sailing, although, perhaps, she did not, on this account, stow so much cargo as she might otherwise have done. Her last voyage, indeed, had been completed in an exceedingly short space of time, and there were few vessels belonging to the port from which she

hailed of similar construction that could compete with her at sea.

Towards evening the wind, which had been blowing all along pretty briskly, rather lulled, so that our progress was in some measure retarded; it blew a little stronger, however, towards morning, and we again careered over the water with our former velocity. Oh! it is inspiriting, dashing recklessly over the wide expanse of water, bearing in your breast the true spirit of adventure, and shut out, as it were, from a world in which such a variety of interests prevail, and where so many distinctions are made. Here there are none. The crew of the vessel is, or ought to be, knit together in one bond of fellowship, with the captain at their head. Their interests are identical, their lives, their property, are equally at stake; and what affects the interests of one, affects the interests of all. I envy not those men who, disgusted with the cares and vanities of the world, immure themselves within monasteries to free themselves from its contamination. Their life is one of unceasing monotony, and could only be tolerated by the dullest and most phlegmatic of men. At sea we have all these advantages, without any of their disagreeable accompaniments; we are separated from the world, and form a brotherhood amongst ourselves. Our lives are full of excitement and adventure; we are perpetually moving from one scene to another, so that the world to us is a great panorama,

which is continually shifting before our eyes in order that we may see it in every phase. And the aspect of nature is not less susceptible of change. The ocean to-day is spread before us like a slumbering child, gentle and placid, its surface scarcely furrowed by a ripple; to-morrow it boils and surges round the devoted vessel in its angriest mood, and threatens every moment to engulph ship and mariners in its unfathomable abyss. Now the blue sky overhead seems to rival the slumbering ocean beneath in its gentleness and serenity; again it is obscured by clouds and vapours, its spacious dome reverberates with the terrific thunder peals, and ever and again it is illumined with preternatural brilliancy by the dazzling lightning. There is a variety, therefore, every day of our lives.

The first two or three days passed away very pleasantly. The weather was exceedingly fine, and the vessel had made considerable progress. It was on the fourth day we entered the Bay of Biscay, when we began to experience a little rougher weather. So far our voyage had

been prosperous. It was henceforth to be otherwise.

In the course of the day in question, some angry words, which arose from a very trivial cause, passed between the captain and me. He was exceedingly angry, and used some taunting and bitter expressions, which sunk deep into my heart. I chafed and boiled under the insult which had been inflicted upon me. I brooded over it continually. It was my turn for the watch upon deck that night. When almost all on board had betaken themselves to their sleeping berths, I paced the deck alone. There was everything around me to calm the angry feeling which had taken possession of me, but in vain. The night was beautiful and tran-The deep blue sky was thickly bestudded with stars, which shed a mild radiance upon the ocean beneath. The crescent moon lent her bewitching influence to the scene, and silvered with her rays the dark blue waves, over which our vessel bounded so eagerly. As far as the eye could reach on every side of us, the ocean stretched for miles and miles, and not a sail or craft of any kind was within sight. There were dark thoughts flitting through my mind, and an accursed fiend was perpetually whispering in my ear, and prompting me to an act from which, as I write, my heart recoils with horror. I contended, I struggled manfully with the fiend; I determined to resist his instigations, and to overlook the injury which I conceived had been inflicted upon me. It was our province to forgive, and especially so when the insult that had been applied to me had been used in a moment of excitement, and when the head scarcely knew what the tongue was uttering. I tried to reason in this manner and to resist all the appeals that the fiend was constantly making to me. My resistance, however, was of no effect, and in spite of all my efforts my evil genius prevailed. I resolved, should the opportunity ever occur, to take vengeance upon the captain for the injustice he had done me. It will be thought by some that time would heal the wounds under which I bled, and that my animosity would become less rancorous, and gradually subside altogether. However it might have been with others, it was not so with me. It increased rather than abated, and only waited for an opportunity to indulge its love of revenge. That opportunity, alas! came sooner than I had anticipated.

Since the occasion to which I have just referred, I showed no ill-feeling towards the captain, neither to the men nor to himself; but in

doing so I had an object, and that was, to throw the latter off his guard, and to prevent any suspicion being thrown upon myself in case anything should befal him. As for myself, he was as friendly towards me as he had been on the day I first put my foot on board the vessel, and evidently thought no more of the few angry words which had occurred to mar the harmony which had previously subsisted between us.

He stood one day at the stern of the vessel. The other part of the ship's company were below at dinner. He had hold of the helm with one hand, and in the other he held a pipe. I approached where he was, and entered into conversation with him. He talked away in his usual friendly style. He had occasion, afterwards, to adjust some of the ropes upon the bowsprit—whilst he was so engaged I took the helm. I watched every movement he made with the greatest vigilance. I saw him place one foot in a critical position, whilst the other was suspended in the air. It only required the least impetus given to his body to precipitate him into the sea. The chance was tempting. In a moment my outraged feelings recurred to me with all their former bitterness; the blood mounted to my cheeks, and my heart seemed to swell with indig-I approached unobserved nearer to him; I raised my hand—I looked around-I saw nobody on deck. As quick as thought, and before he had any chance of detecting my movement, I placed my hand upon his back, and in another moment he was struggling in the sea. I looked over the stern of the vessel. He sank, but he quickly rose to the sur-He was an indifferent swimmer, but he contrived to support himself above water for some little time. He saw me looking at him, and with piteous cries he implored my assistance. I mocked his sufferings. I gloated over the dreadful situation in which I had placed him-wretch that I was, his misery and anguish caused a momentary feeling of pleasure to thrill through my system. I watched him sink for the last time, and then hastened to apprise the crew of the disaster that had befallen him.

"Quick-quick, men, on deck! our captain is overboard!" I shouted to

them.

In a moment they rushed upon deck. I seized hold of a rope and threw it over the stern of the ship. I knew, of course, it was of no avail, but I wished to appear anxious for the preservation of the captain's life, the more effectually to blind the men as to the real cause of his untimely death. The captain was nowhere to be seen when they reached the deck. I informed them that he was busy adjusting a rope upon the bowsprit, and that whilst doing so he had lost his balance and fallen overboard. My statement excited no incredulity, for the friendship that appeared to subsist between myself and the captain, together with my apparent concern at his unexpected death, at once allayed all suspicion. This event caused my promotion. I was previously second officer on board—hence the removal of the captain caused me to take command of the vessel.

I had indulged my revenge, and was now commander of one of the finest vessels that ever crossed the ocean. It was a poor consideration for the sacrifice I had made. My peace of mind was gone for ever—the thought of the awful crime I had perpetrated was ever present to me. There was a bitterness now mixed with every pleasure. I experienced no longer the delight which I had once felt in gazing upon the wide expanse of water stretched before me; the sun's rays were not so genial, nor did they appear to impart such a warmth to my frame as they

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had previously done; the sky above my head was not tinted with such various colours as formerly—in short, the whole aspect of nature was changed. There was a greater change than this. He, the murdered man, was ever present! His voice was ever ringing in my ears. Wherever I moved, he was there! If I sought relief in company—if I drank to drive those thoughts away, which almost drove me to distraction, it proved of no avail.

I had brought a curse upon the ship, for since the captain's death nothing appeared to prosper with us. The wind became contrary, and blew a hurricane; the sea was lashed to its utmost fury, and threatened

every moment our destruction.

I stood upon the deck. It was a fearful night, and the storm raged with undiminished violence. I could not remain here long. I went down to the cabin with blanched countenance, and my hair hanging in matted locks about my countenance. I was scarcely able to speak, and the perspiration streamed from my face.

"I have seen him-I have seen him," at length I screamed out.

"What do you say?" inquired the mate.

"I have seen him-I have seen the captain," I replied.

He attempted to reason with me. He protested that I was labouring under a delusion, that my imagination had deceived me; but it was to no purpose. I declared solemnly that I had seen the captain climbing the shrouds of the vessel; that I had seen him on the deck walking backwards and forwards, as though he were giving his commands as usual. Sometimes he pointed with his hand, as if in the act of giving directions to the crew; sometimes he was upon one of the yard-arms, reefing a sail; sometimes he stood at the helm, guiding the vessel with his accustomed skill. His curiosity was excited by my narrative, and he accompanied me upon deck. He declared emphatically he saw nothing calculated to excite his alarm. I stood shivering with fear; my feet appeared to be riveted to the deck, and my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. Oh, God! that dreadful night—that hour of unspeakable anguish. There are periods in existence when all the bitterness of a lifetime seems to be compressed into a few moments; and this was one. There was everything around us to make the stoutest heart quail with horror. The sea yawned like a vast, insatiable gulf, into which every moment we were threatened to be hurled; the wind roared and whistled through the ropes and rigging of the vessel, and the strained masts and fluttering canvas bore testimony to the violence of the storm. The forked lightning darted through the black atmosphere, and the thunder rent the air with dreadful noises. At intervals the rain poured in one continual stream, as though a deluge was about to revisit the earth. The winds, the sea, the sky appeared in a league against us, as though they were resolved on our destruction. But onward we went-now plunging into the trough of the sea, now riding over the top of a mountainous wave. Each moment we thought would be our last, for we never expected that our vessel could survive such a tremendous tempest. And amid all the storm, amid the pelting of the rain, the howling of the winds, and the incessant pitching of the vessel, there was one who never seemed to have lost his presence of mind-who walked to and fro with the greatest self-possession—who appeared to give his commands with the utmost calmness, adjusted the canvas, the ropes, as if there was nothing around us to excite our apprehensions. Noiselessly he seemed to

glide across the surf-covered decks, and moved from place to place with the most extraordinary rapidity, as though the whole charge of the vessel was entrusted to his hands—now he stood at the helm—now he was perched aloft -in another moment he was upon deck; and so he moved from place to place with the quickness of thought. But, gracious God! who was this heroic and skilful mariner? Was he one of ourselves?was he flesh and blood?—was he susceptible of the infirmities of man? For him the strained masts might quiver in the blast-for him the tempesttossed vessel might be engulphed in the waves-for him the scorching lightning might burn her timbers to ashes, he was insensible to the sufferings of mortality—he had passed through the portals that separate the living from the dead -he was a shadow, fleeting and without substance. And were our lives and property entrusted to his keeping? If so, what assistance was to be expected at his hands? What feelings but those of animosity could he entertain towards us-at least towards myself?—for was not I the cause of his death?—was I not the wretch who, at a moment when he was off his guard, had availed myself of the opportunity to encompass his destruction? Yes, that mysterious mariner was the shadow of the murdered captain. To others he was invisible, but to me he was as distinct as ever he had been during his lifetime.

Oh! what thoughts did that terrible spectacle conjure up in my mind. Upon that tumultuous sea, amid the roar and strife of the elements—far, far away from my beloved France, and upbraided with the bitterest remorse—I wished that the vessel might strike, and so terminate the career of a wretch who could hope for no peace on this side of the grave. And was I fit to die?—was I prepared to face HIM whom I had so grievously offended? I felt, indeed, that it was far otherwise. The storm waxed more violent, and yet our vessel was borne triumphantly over the waves. It was impossible that she could have done this except by supernatural assistance. I was convinced of it. I felt that

human aid in such a storm would have been of no avail.

I could bear these dreadful sights no longer, and I again rushed into the cabin; but I had no sooner entered it, than I fell prostrate upon my face. I was horror-stricken, and for several minutes insensible. The figure of the captain was seated by the table, upon which his arms were resting. By the aid of a lamp he was examining a chart, as if

for the purpose of tracing the course the vessel was steering.

When I recovered, the horrible spectacle was still present. The sight was unbearable. I again reached the deck; the men and passengers stood in anxious consultation, as to the imminent danger we were in. They were paralysed with the unwonted violence of the storm, and the most experienced amongst them declared that they had never before witnessed such a tempest. I was so much overcome by terror myself that I scarcely knew what I was about. I gave directions, however, for the masts to be cut away. The men immediately brought implements for that purpose. When they had commenced their work, I observed another amongst them, lending all the assistance in his power. He applied his axe as lustily as the rest, and was apparently endowed with as much strength and activity. It was he before whom I quailed with the utmost horror. It was that dauntless mariner, who had already manifested such interest in our welfare.

I proceeded towards the cabin. Overcome with fear and fatigue, I

sank upon the stairs. I know not how long I remained in this position.

I was aroused by an alarm of fire.

I leaped upon deck. Great God! what a sight met my eyes! Dense bodies of flame ascended the main hatchway. The sea was rolling mountains high, and the wind and rain contended furiously for the mastery. The ship was driving at a furious rate, and this gave an impetus to the conflagration. A boat, before I reached the deck, had been attempted to be launched, but, unfortunately, was swamped in the act. The crew and passengers were struggling with the waves. Oh! never before was I called upon to witness such a scene. My head swims, and I feel sick and faint as I recal the horrible spectacle. The groans and cries of drowning men-the shrieks of women-the crackling of the vessel's timbers-the roaring of the wind, and the commotion of the waves, formed a combination of sounds which the devils in hell might be supposed to delight in. There was no hope, however, for them—they were fast receding from the vessel. I saw one woman with her arm pressed tightly round her infant, whilst with the other she endeavoured to contend with the waves. I saw the greatest maternal anxiety depicted in her countenance—I saw her repeatedly press the child closer to her bosom—I saw her sink and rise again-I heard a bubble, a groan-and, sinner as I was, I thanked God that death had released them from their sufferings.

It has frequently been my lot to witness terrible catastrophes on shore, but all of them fall infinitely short, in point of horror, of a fire at sea amid a raging tempest. The sea for miles was illumined with the awful conflagration, and an additional lustre was imparted to the sky, along

which the lightning still continued to dart at distant intervals.

I ran about like one beside himself. I earnestly prayed to God Almighty to deliver me from the awful fate that seemed to await me. Help could come from no other quarter. I was alone—alone on that dreadful ocean that foamed and roared as if its insatiable jaws were longing to swallow me up—on one side the tumultuous sea, on the other my funeral pyre burning at my feet. Even yet I think I see those awful faces, scarred and burnt, with dishevelled hair streaming down them—yes, the careworn, anxious faces of my lost comrades are yet before me, illumined, as it were, with the fire, in which some of them perished.

The timbers of the vessel cracked with the excessive heat, but still she sped through the water, an immense burning mass, which was before long

to be swallowed up by the waves.

I was unable to render myself the least assistance. I was unmanned—not so much by the tempest—not so much by the fearful conflagration, which of themselves were sufficient to excite a feeling of terror in the stoutest hearts. Terrible as these things were, they were natural—they were things which had occurred before, and which would occur again. There was, however, a phenomenon which was not natural—which, so far as my experience was concerned, had never occurred before, and which, in all probability, would never occur again. There was a phenomenon, compared with which all others sink into insignificance, which freezes the very blood in the veins, and causes the reason to totter on her throne. Oh, God! the fire—the ocean—the lurid and thunder-riven sky were nothing—death itself was nothing in comparison with it. The chastising hand of God was upon me! I had hurled an innocent man into eternity without a moment's preparation—without almost any provocation. The

all-seeing eye of Heaven had witnessed the deed, and God had sent the tempest, he had sent the fire, and, lastly, he had sent an ever-present witness of my crime, which had been invisible to all on board except myself. The thought was maddening! I shuddered when I reflected on the blackness of my guilt, and when the vengeance of Heaven became so apparent to my eyes. What is death? what is the most dreadful punishment that can be inflicted upon men compared with the agony of a heart torn to pieces by the bitterest anguish and remorse? I had been brave—I had used every exertion to save our vessel and our lives—I had hazarded every danger—were it not that the damning testimony of my crime was ever present to my eyes. It was this that subdued me—it was this that rendered me powerless, and deprived me of every faculty that could have been exercised for our preservation.

The mysterious figure was still there, rapidly but noiselessly moving along the deck, apparently active in its endeavours to subdue the rapidly

spreading conflagration.

I have but an imperfect recollection of what afterwards took place. I remember scrambling into a boat—I remember seeing the figure of the

captain seated at the stern; but of the rest I am ignorant.

I feel persuaded that I have not many hours to live. I have, however, accomplished one thing. I have disburdened my mind of its guilt, and, whilst I deprecate the anger of men, I beseech them to have charity. My dying words to them are—Priez pour les malheureux.

THE FIDDLER'S FATE.

AN ANECDOTE.

I.

Ir promised to be a very brilliant season. The monarchy of the modern Nestor—Louis Philippe—was established; the storms that had passed over the political heavens left behind them a clear atmosphere of repose and good humour; and all classes vied with each other as to the quantity of amusement that should be crowded into an interval of peace, so unusual in the volcanic world of Paris.

It may readily be imagined, therefore, that the advent of a new musician, of whom report spoke highly, was an event that drew a large and impatient audience to the great concert-room at the Opera House; and that the person principally concerned in the success of the début—videlicet, the violinist himself—was, during that cold and gusty March morning, in a state of nervous anxiety little calculated to improve the

chances of a highly successful performance.

He strode about, then, this young magician of the bow, with his long fair hair floating behind him, as the energy of impatience drove him from one end of his apartment to the other; the soft blue eye, that told of northern origin, assumed unusual fire, as the thought flashed through and through his mind that, on the success or failure of that morning's work, depended fame, fortune, friends, and gratified ambition. The placid expression, habitual to that good-looking face, gave way to nervous and agitated glances; and still he strode from room to room, and

found no relief from his anxious anticipations. He lives in one of the streets branching from the Boulevards with a brother musician, who, on the morning in question, has vainly endeavoured to soothe the irritation of Paganini's young rival; and has left him—hopeless of succeeding in his friendly design—to commune with his own thoughts, which at length find expression in a soliloquy, addressed, with all the ardour of a lover's language, to the object that was to be either the sharer of his success or the companion of his failure—his cremona:

"To thee, faithful friend—to thee I look for hope and consolation—solace of weary hours of labour—untiring in thy responses to my wishes—inspiration of my genius!—hope of my future—joy of my past—to thee I must confide my anxieties. Thou wilt not betray me." And here he passed his bow across the strings, and drew forth a sweet and touching melody in answer to his appeal. "No, I feel that thou wilt

be faithful still-and yet-"

How very nervous our young friend is! Go, if you be wise, friend, and seek relief from this care that afflicts you in the crowd out of doors. Pah! the confined air stifles you; the furniture looks grim, and faces stare at you from the walls; go out, and see faces more anxious than your own; go and meet vagabonds with no hope before them—no pleasant memories bygone; go and look at the poor old invalid who is drawn by you in the carriage that he shall soon exchange for a hearse; and watch that sick child smiling faintly in its dear mother's tearful face; look at that eager wretch that rushes headlong through the crowd—he has just issued out from the gaming-table, where his last Louis has been won by sharpers—there is no hope for him. There is for you; cheer up, brave heart, and learn the lesson of endurance from the myriads round you. Whatever your griefs or trials may be, depend on't you would shrink, shaming, back into your ungrateful heart, could you but know how much your neighbour bears without complaint.

He follows my advice: already the cold air revives and strengthens him. Pierre, his servant, will carry the beloved cremona to the concertroom, where he will meet him, anxious, but ready to abide the critical judgment of the fashionable assembly that is to decide his doom. He has traversed the cheerful Boulevards, he passes the classical Madelaine, he strides through the Place de la Concorde, and reaches the Quays; a crowd is round the landing-place hard by, in which he has obtained a place in time to witness the raising of a woman's body on the shutter that shall bear her to the Morgue—there to lie for some days for the chance of a friendly claim to the possession of that livid mass of what once was warm life and perilous beauty—failing that, to be removed to an unmarked, unhonoured grave, and this world's oblivion for the worm

that perished in sin.

Shocked and startled though he was, our young friend took to speculating on the subject of suicide; and, as many do who indulge fancy to the exclusion of stern morality, concluded, finally, that if the candle gives not light enough, it is well to extinguish it altogether. Musing thus, and calling to mind the noble simplicity with which so many of the ancients passed out of the world when they were weary of it—until at length felo-de-se assumed the lustre of a virtue to his eyes—the débutant marches to the theatre, consoled to think that he may comfortably evade the pangs of disappointment should he meet with it, and

very indulgent to the morose and gloomy view of things that his morn-

ing's adventure had excited.

Behold him at the gates; with a palpitating heart and trembling hand he pushes open the portal, and with faltering voice inquires for his servant. He has not yet come; but it wants some minutes yet of the time fixed for the commencement of the concert, and the fashionable crowd is content to anticipate the feast of reason prepared for its entertainment by a preparatory survey of its individual members. Pleased with himself, every man appears gratified with his neighbour; he is there for amusement, and finds it (not, as we do, in an uncharitable spirit of ridicule, or, still worse, in morose resentment of the idea of being pleased under any circumstances whatever), in receiving and rendering those little civilities of act and word that distinguished the Frenchman of those long-past days. O tempora! O mores! how changed all these things now.

Time flies, and yet no Pierre, no cremona. A messenger is despatched to the musician's home, and returns, bearing the information that servant and idol have left the house some time, and may be momentarily expected. Patience—patience. Offers are made of the use of other instruments, and despairingly rejected; no hope but in the one, and that is lost or strayed. Finally, the impatient expectation is wrought to the pitch of intolerance both in audience and performer, and the latter determines on a personal effort to recover his fiddle and opportunity, and rushes madly though the streets homeward. It is in vain; no Pierre—no kit—no case even.

The man is new to Paris—he has lost his way; or, it may be, has met a friend who tempts him to the wine shop, to drink success to the master whom his delay is ruining. There is no trace—no hope! Ah! yes, there is hope of relief—the Seine, the Seine! Pierre will find him at the Morgue, and perhaps follow him there in his turn! Fate will be cheated of his destined disappointment, and Paris will be entertained no less by the death than it would have been by the début of the romantic and broken-hearted Russian.

If the thought was rapid, its execution was not tardily accomplished. Again he finds his way to the scene of the morning's visit; a hasty glance around, through the gathering mists of evening, a silent plunge,

and all is over-perhaps.

There is in the Seine at Paris nearly as much mud as water, and he who desires to drown must manage well to avoid suffocation by solid in place of liquid agency. This fact will explain, perhaps, how it was that our young friend, finding himself in some danger of taking up permanent quarters in the bed of the river, evaded that unpleasant risk by striking out with considerable energy, and floating, aided by the current, adown the course of the river; but coats and other articles of usual dress are not calculated to assist efforts of natation; consequently, despite of a strong disposition to prolong the pleasures of a voluntary death, by resisting the embraces of the god of rivers as long as might be, the poor suicide found his legs too heavy for him, and his lungs not sufficiently buoyant, and, in short, after a few moments of severe mental agony and repentance, found himself dreaming of pleasant green fields, taking a rapid survey of his past life, thought of his mother and home, of the days when he said his prayers, and slept without dreams.

CERTAINLY pretty! not, perhaps, so refined as you, madame; her hands are not so delicate, nor her figure so élancée; she is not bien gautée, nor bien chaussée, nor bien anything but bien good-looking, and as good as she looks. Youthful, healthful bloom is on her cheek, and that is a pleasant thing to see; there is no double meaning in those glances that sparkle so merrily, or melt so sweetly into expressive sympathy; those rosy little lips are certainly not used to say what they do not mean; and, to judge by their expression, they should be accustomed to say the best-natured things in the world. Look at her as she sits by the invalid's bedside: how watchful yet silent-how eager in her attention, yet collected in her demeanour. Were it our privilege to read her thoughts, how much we might edify our readers with a homily on the duties of nurses, with compassionate details of the sufferings she has had to assuage; when, my dear young lady, you have watched that dear old lady through a month of rheumatic gout, and silently endured all the ill-humours so inseparable from such a curdling of the milk of human kindness as is caused by that, or any other ailing, you will form some idea of the patience requisite for the performance of such a dutiful attention; -you, my dear fellow, who expect that old gentleman to make his will before he dies (a legal ceremony he is much indisposed to perform, owing to a vague notion that when that is done he shall have forfeited instanter the privilege of continuing to debar his loving relatives of the melancholy satisfaction of paying his earthly remains the last testimonies of respect)-you, I say, my dear fellow, will sympathise, perchance, with the trials, and admire the endurance, of my darling little Lisette, when your daily devotion and watchfulness turn at last to the despairing hope that a merciful Providence cannot much longer continue to afflict humanity with the "hope deferred"-of release from anxiety and pain.

"Pierre, you villain! destroyer of my peace! you did it to ruin me!

My idol! my ideal! my delight! lost to me for ever!"

Poor Lisette looks very eager now, and, truth to tell, not too well pleased. "How," thinks she, half aloud—"how could his delight have the heart to be lost to him for ever? If I were his delight, I would not let any one be the destroyer of his happiness. No, dear fellow-so

young, to be so unhappy. I wish I could console him.

Here the invalid turned round, and fixing those speculative eyes upon the musing maid, faintly begged for drink; and when those kind hands gave him the refreshing draught, they were retained for a few moments in that fevered grasp, and pressed with grateful tenderness. It is very odd that an incident so simple should cause much sensation in anybody's mind; but, when my pretty Lisette met the glance of those big blue eyes, and felt the gentle pressure of the hand, her impulse was to bend over it; and when, after a few moments' interval the blushing face was raised avertedly, some drops of a refreshing dew had fallen on the emaciated palm, and on the clothes that had buried that good face awhile.

"Lisette! Lisette!" cried a loud and startling voice from another room. And Lisette, with a kind word of caution to the half-sleeping invalid, darted in the direction of the summons, drying her eyes as she went.

III.

[&]quot;Mr sweet angel! my guardian and preserver! What shall I do to

show you gratitude and love? Yes, love! for my heart is full of you

and your goodness. You are my idol! my ideal! my delight!"

Poor Lisette cannot answer him. The very words! A week ago, and somebody else was his idol, ideal, and delight! and was lost to him for ever—and now! the cant phrase that had brought misery to that unhappy one, was applied to her, to be—who knows how soon abandoned or "lost" in her turn. The very heart of our dear Lisette turned cold at such wholesale devotion, and there is no saying to what extreme her indignation might not have reached, had she not been restrained by generosity towards the invalid, and something or other that she read in those very good-looking blue eyes.

IV.

Pierre is in a state of distraction, and Paris rings with the mysterious disparition of our young friend. Fortunately for my story (for else I should have had none to tell) the police of Paris is, and was, little disposed to concern itself with the private affairs of people, and a few murders, robberies, abductions, and suicides, are matters foreign to the functions of those guardians of the civil liberties. Had any one observed within earshot of a gendarme that the King of the French had a head like a pear, he might have found himself speedily located in close durance—but, as for suicide, if monsieur does not like Paris, and takes to the Seine as a means of quitting it—"c'est son affaire"—politeness prohibits interference.

Pierre is, therefore, almost unassisted in his exertions to trace the lost fiddler. Many and ardent are the sacrés with which he anathematises the easy disposition that led him to accept the solicitations of Jacques Bonhomme to drink his master's health on his road to the Opera House. Why did he get so excited—so indiscreet?—why did that gobemouche Orleanist say so much in favour of the citizen-king, when Pierre's tendencies were so strongly Jacobinical?—why on earth did they not permit him to leave the cremona for his master on his road to the préfecture? Why, madame, because a procès verbal must be drawn up; and it is impossible to know whether the fiddle-case may not turn out an im-

portant witness in the evidence for the prosecution.

Thus it was that master and man were playing at cross-purposes; thus it was that the Seine found an odd fish the more in it; thus that Lisette found little time to spare from the sick room for the diurnal occupation of beating shape and substance out of the various linens confided to the charge of "Madame Duchesne Blanchisseuse," her respected mother; thus it was that some short space after the events herein set forth occurred, Pierre was rewarded for the fidelity with which he sought and mourned his lost master, by obtaining, through his means, the prettiest and kindest mistress in all Paris; and the hero of my little history found himself blessed in the possession of two idols—two ideals—two delights; the one had saved his life, the other made his living.

In its main points, this little tale is true. The record must close with

some touch of sadness in the writer's mind.

The hand that drew those thrilling tones from the stringed toy is nerveless now; the high heart has ceased to beat—the simple nature, to rejoice. The generous giver has no more to give; the ambitious soul has soared its highest now; and the machine that enshrined some of the finest feelings and gentlest thoughts of our kind, was known among us by the name of Ole Bull.

AUNT BRIDGET.

BY G. F. PEARSON.

"Perhaps Aunt Bridget may take a fancy to Godfrey, mamma, and leave him all her money," said my little sister Helena, who was always

of a sanguine disposition.

"Nonsense, child," replied my mother; "your Aunt Bridget never took a fancy to anybody, and never will. She will leave her money to charities, unless she spends it all on this new church she is building. She is incapable of loving anything is Bridget Willoughby, and always was," added my mother, conclusively.

My father smiled; he never contradicted my mother, for he was a peaceable man, but he smiled often at her rash assertions upon subjects upon which he happened to be better informed than herself; and on this he might well be so, as Miss Willoughby, whom I was about to visit, was

my father's sister, or rather half-sister, and not my mother's.

It had taken us all by surprise this invitation which I had received to Ashwell Manor. My aunt received no visitors, and had ignored the existence of our family for many years. I believe my mother even felt some vague anticipations rise up within her less unlike those which my sister Helena had expressed than her language might lead the reader to imagine. It was a glorious day on which I departed from my father's quiet vicarage, and was borne rapidly along by the stage coach through some beautiful country into Hampshire, where my aunt resided. It is strange how some days stand out, clear and well-defined, through the mist of years. That I remember as though it were yesterday; the broad downs on which the sunlight lay, steeping in its beams the purple heath and golden gorse, the steep ascents, and cuttings through the chalk through which we passed. I can even recal the face of one of my fellow-passengers, who sat beside me on the coach, and talked incessantly—a young sailor he was, on his way to Portsmouth.

A beautiful place was my aunt's, which she inherited, with a considerable fortune, through her mother's family. It was late in the evening when we reached Ashwell. The coach passed by the lodge gates. There was a servant there waiting for me, who relieved me of my carpet-bag,

and preceded me to the house.

We walked in silence along the drive, skirted by magnificent evergreens, which soon led us in front of the mansion. It was a large, low mass of building, grey with age, and covered in many parts with ivy, amidst which, at this season, were mingled the bright flowers of the rose, and various creeping plants.

An old servant who opened the house-door, which was screened by a spacious porch, conducted me into the drawing-room, and the presence of

my aunt.

Candles were already lighted, and illumined one portion of the vast apartment—that where my aunt was sitting before a writing-table covered with papers.

"Mr. Godfrey Willoughby," announced the servant, and withdrew. My aunt looked up for an instant, and nodded, but did not rise from her

chair, nor offer to shake hands. I was a shy youth, and her reception did not reassure me.

I found a chair with some awkwardness, and sat gazing upon my aunt, who was already engaged in writing again, and seemed to have become insensible to my presence. Her face must once have been very beautiful; even now the regularity of her features was most striking, as well as the clear delicacy of her complexion. Her hair, of which she still retained an abundance, was perfectly grey. It was arranged with great neatness and grace, and gave a peculiar character to her appearance. She wore no cap over it.

Whilst I was engaged in reconnoitring her thus, another lady entered the room. Her appearance was in striking contrast to that of my aunt. She seemed to be younger in years, and what of her hair was visible beneath a closely-fitting cap was still of a deep rich brown. She wore a dark dress; and whereas the features and manner of my aunt expressed only a sharp and unpleasing decisiveness, those of this lady seemed only to indicate softness and refinement, with the traces, I thought, of some sorrow, through which her life, or part of it, had passed.

"Will you be kind enough to talk to my nephew, Mrs. Dalton, until I finish this letter?" said my aunt. Her voice was loud, and somewhat sharp, or rather, perhaps, I should say, unnaturally clear and articulate

in tone.

It was an unpromising beginning for a conversation with a shy boy and a strange lady. But Mrs. Dalton rose superior to the emergency. Before my aunt's strange request was concluded, she had turned to me, as though quite irrespectively of it, and addressed to me, with her sweet smile, some trifling question about my journey, which set me at once at my ease with her.

I thought her the most charming person I had ever seen, and was deeply engaged in discussing with her the many books which I had read, and the few places which I had seen, when my aunt's clear, cold voice

broke in upon our conversation.

"At what hour is it that we may expect your daughter, Mrs. Dalton?"

"At eight. She will be here now directly almost, I should think."

"My child has given my kind friend and myself much anxiety, Mr. Willoughby," said Mrs. Dalton, turning to me; "she is returning to us unexpectedly from her school, where a dangerous fever has broken out, which is likely to prove fatal to more than one of her companions."

"She will not go back to that place again," said my aunt, decisively;

"fevers imply mismanagement, bad air, or food, or water."

Mrs. Dalton seemed inclined to demur that the establishment might not necessarily be responsible for such a visitation. But she stopped short, listened, and exclaimed:

"She is here!-do you not hear the carriage?"

A flush passed over the pale countenance of my Aunt Bridget—the carriage-wheels were heard grating on the gravel beneath the windows. Mrs. Dalton left the room, and returned leading her daughter. My aunt rose from her seat, advanced, folded her in her arms, then held her at some distance, gazing upon her.

"You are well, child?" she said; "you feel nothing the matter with

you, I trust?" I thought that a tear fell slowly over my aunt's cheek,

but her voice was firm, and clear, and cold as before.

"Perfectly well," answered the young lady. In proof, as it were, of the fact, she untied the strings of her bonnet, and let the long curls fall around a face radiant with youth and beauty; the large dark eyes seemed to meet my aunt's without displaying any of that uneasiness which I her

nephew felt so painfully in her presence.

We all have our boyish dreams of beauty—dreams realised but once completely in our lives. The years disenchant us often, and the same faces which we admired once we should not perhaps admire again, could we even see them as they were. But some there are so blessed, that the same beauty which beamed upon their boyhood has looked down upon them to gladden and to cheer through the hard battle of youth, and reward them at its close.

With all the passion of my deep-feeling but not very demonstrative nature, I loved then for the first time. The only drawback to my complete felicity during my fortnight's visit at Ashwell, was the difficulty of being alone with Ella, and the still greater one of saying anything very much to the purpose when I was so for a brief instant. The last night but one of my visit I lay awake, I remember, till morning, resolutely determining that I would say something ere I left, and shaping words and phrases, which I felt, while I shaped them, that the first instant of opportunity for uttering them would put to flight.

My aunt seemed to keep unusual watch over Ella and myself that day; but towards evening she was summoned to the cottage of a poor sick person for her advice and assistance, which she was ever ready to give in such cases, and Ella was in the shrubbery alone. I saw her white dress gleaming through the dark evergreens, and with trembling

heart followed the direction which she had taken.

I joined her, and know not well how I begun, but in a few moments I had begun, and told her all the history of my boyish passion. She must have perceived it before, but she stood before me, silent, startled, and alarmed, as I proceeded.

I paused for breath; but she did not speak.

Her hands were full of roses, which she had been gathering for some vases in the drawing-room.

"Ella," I said, "give me one of those to remember you by, when I am far away."

She offered them to me as it were mechanically.

"No," I said, "give me one yourself."

"Rubbish," said the sharp voice of my Aunt Bridget. "Give them to me, child, all of them," she said, as she grasped the flowers in her firm hand.

"I heard your last words, sir," she said, "unintentionally, as I was walking over this smooth turf through these thick bushes. I am sorry to have broken your romance, young man, but let it be broken and remain so. For you, Ella, remember what I told you this morning; I repeat it now. Love in a woman must end in misery and disappointment. The man she loves forsakes her, and chooses another; then she thinks herself miserable, and is so in a degree, or he marries her and neglects her, and then she is miserable and completely——"

While she spoke, she had walked rapidly on to the house, leaning on my arm, Ella upon her other side.

When we entered the hall she turned to me and said:

"You leave here to-morrow, sir; I wish to speak with you this evening; if you go into the breakfast-room I will join you there, when I have

taken off my shawl."

There was a strange mixture of grimness and kindliness in my Aunt Bridget. My fortnight's stay in the house had wonderfully decreased my dread of her. Even now, as she entered the breakfast-room, I felt

less alarm at her presence than when I first found myself in it.

She sat down in a large easy-chair of crimson velvet, high-backed, with multitudinous brass nails upon it, and motioned me to take another opposite. I waited for her to open the conversation, expecting that it would relate to what had just passed. But she fixed her eyes calmly and searchingly on me, as was her way in addressing you, and said:

"When is your father going to send you to Oxford, Godfrey?"

"I scarcely know," I answered; "I was to have gone up this autumn, but"—I paused, not liking to assign the real reason for my not doing so—

"my father was not able to manage it."

"I am not surprised at it," she said; "when people marry beneath them, as your father did, and have large families, as he has, one of the necessary results is, that their children's education must go to the wall. How old are you?"

"Nineteen," I replied.

"It is time you went up, then," she said; "and you will go to Christchurch. I have no opinion of small colleges; people send their children to small colleges to keep them out of society and expense. This is foolish; if a small college prove idle and extravagant, a man has no chance but to be idle and extravagant too; in a large one he may choose his own line, and it is his own fault if it prove a wrong one."

My Aunt Bridget spoke exactly as if she had finished her own educa-

tion at Oxford. I looked at her in amazement.

"You will knock at my dressing-room door in the morning," she continued, "and I will give you a letter for your father; you will have to breakfast early, as the coach passes here at eight. No one will be down before you start but the servants. Will you tell Miss Dalton I wish to see her?" she added, as I moved towards the door, "that is, if you find her in the drawing-room."

When I entered the drawing-room, however, I found it occupied only by Mrs. Dalton; her daughter did not appear again during the evening, nor my aunt, until the hour for family prayers, after which she wished

me good night.

In the morning, when I knocked at the door of her dressing-room, she

gave me a packet for my father.

"You will go to Oxford in October," she said, as she gave it into my hands, "and my parting advice to you is, work—life is made for deeds, not dreams."

It was quite true; I did go to Oxford in October; my aunt's letter, I believe, providing the means for my doing so, and for my continuing there, but distinctly disclaiming all further intentions in my favour.

I believe I followed my aunt's advice pretty well; the honours which I

took at the University were, perhaps, some proof that I did so.

But evermore over my hours of solitude and study, ay, and over those passed in the sterner struggle of life which followed, hung the memory of that young girlish face and form, seen last in the shrubbery at Ashwell. At last I had overcome in the strife; my first act when I felt myself independent, and that my prospects warranted such a proceeding, was to write to Miss Dalton, entreating her, if the memory of the past still clung to her as it did to me, to grace and brighten that position which I had only won for her. The next post brought a letter, not from her, but from my aunt.

"You have disturbed the current of the child's life" (she wrote), "and you have unsettled all my plans; the best thing for you to do is to come down to Ashwell, and for you both to be guided by the result of

your visit .- B. W."

I hastened down to Ashwell, and found Ella lovelier than ever; the trace of thought upon her brow had only added to her beauty. Mrs. Dalton looked older to me; my aunt the same as when I last left Ashwell.

At the end of a fortnight—the happiest I had ever known—I had a second interview with my aunt in the breakfast-room. We sat at the same hour, occupying the same chairs. I almost expected that she would commence the conference with asking for an explanation of the words which she had just overheard in the shrubbery-walk. Instead of which,

the words she uttered were, as far as I remember, these:

"I told your father, Godfrey, that you and your family had nothing more to expect from me, but such help as I could give towards completing your education. And I told him that all that I have to leave would go to another than one of my own family. What I said then was my intention. Ella Dalton will inherit all I have, and it was my hope and prayer that she would remain single as I have done, and avoid the great unhappiness of most women's lives-love and marriage-but God has ordered it otherwise; and in following the dictates of my own inclinations towards her, I am able to combine what was, perhaps, a duty to my own relations as well. You and she, now conjointly, will inherit Ashwell and all I have to leave. You may wish to know why I have preferred her to my own family. I will tell you. Her father was betrothed to me; he deceived me, and forsook me, and married another woman. I had no fortune then, nor did it seem likely that I should have any. The lady whom he married was supposed to possess a large fortune; when he married her, he found that she had none. He behaved as ill to her as it was possible to behave, and shortened, I have been told, his own life by his excesses, which were the misery of hers. But there are dreams which the strongest of us cannot forget. The few affections I have indulged in life have had a strength proportionate to their fewness. When I heard that Captain Dalton was dead, and his wife and child unprovided for, I took them to my home—the one has been since my sister, the other is still my child."

THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

CHAPTER LXI.

The arrest of the Counts of Egmont and Horn spread universal terror. It seemed the first blast of the storm about to overwhelm the people. Thousands flocked to the seaports, but every precaution was taken to prevent their escape; the mere attempt was considered a crime, and punished accordingly. Thus, with Spanish soldiery quartered in every town, village, and hamlet—hemmed in on all sides—the last hope of the Flemings rested on the regent, and when her departure was made known, despair became general. Even those who had most cavilled at her form of government—who had thought her harsh and unjust, false and inflexible, now that the terror of Alba was upon them, would have gladly re-purchased, at any cost, the evils they had complained of, which, comparatively with those that awaited them, appeared so light in the balance.

Incarcerations of the richest and most influential among the burghers, patricians, and even nobles of the provinces, daily took place, upon the plea that they had actually made part of, or favoured, the confederacy; the slightest admission or accusation was ground sufficient for such violent proceedings. Everywhere new prisons were erected, the more ordinary ones being overfilled, and the Spanish coffers began to replenish under the effects of the most lawless depredations which those then in

authority graced by the name of confiscations.

Trials were suspended, it was rumoured, but until Margaret of Parma had left the country; and the moment of her departure was looked upon by all classes as that when the last barrier against the torrent of the

duke's malignity would be removed.

But if every one was alike saddened by this approaching event, few felt it more deeply than Isabel of Egmont and her young companion, whom the duchess retained about her person to the very last, and who were bound to her as much by the promises she made and the hopes she held out as by a sense of her previous kindness.

Since Alba's bold assumption of power, the regent had almost entirely withdrawn from public affairs, and more frequently required their presence; but now all the bustle of preparation was over, and the hour had

arrived when she was to set out on her long journey.

At an open casement of the palace sat both the young girls looking out upon the active groups in the court below. The horses destined for the regent and her immediate train, with their rich housings, and the sumpter mules laden with mails and other effects, carefully covered with velvet cloths, embroidered with ducal arms, with plumes dancing on their heads, and bells jingling around their necks, were surrounded by noisy varlets and squires actively employed in arranging their trappings; whilst the already mounted escort of the duchess, with their bright helmets and well-polished breastplates, long lances, and fluttering pennons, were drawn up on one side the court-yard. Intermingled with these

were seen the magnificent horses and sumptuous train of the Duke of Alba and other noblemen, who, in escorting their sovereign's sister to the frontier, wished to display all possible splendour in her honour. Apart from these was a small troop of horsemen, under the colours of Egmont, waiting to conduct Isabel from the palace, which she was about to leave for the prison of her father in Ghent. This party was headed by Lamoral, who was every moment expected by his sister.

As Margaret's tearful eyes rested alternately on the light jennet and the fiery barb that were to take far from her, probably for ever, her lover and her friend, she felt the soft hand of Isabel pressing slightly her own, and, turning towards her, she perceived that she, too, was weeping.

"This is, indeed, a trying hour for both of us," said Margaret; "but sadder far for me than for you; you are leaving an abode you never loved, to fly to one that contains what you most prize on earth; whilst I shall see the world close against me for ever, at the moment when fresh affections tempt me back to it."

"And is it nothing," said Isabel, "to lose that sweetest of all solaces, the society of a friend of my own age and sex, the first, the only friend I ever had? You do me less than justice if you suppose that the pain of parting is not mutual. I shall feel the separation most deeply of the two, for your nature is more buoyant than mine."

"I did not say," replied Margaret, "that you grieve less than I do,

but merely that you had less cause for grief."

"Is it," said Isabel, with a mournful smile, "because I am not going to a convent? What you consider so great a sorrow, is my ultimate hope in life. The cloister is a blessed refuge for those whose wishes, whose hopes, whose love have all been in vain."

Margaret obviously understood the full meaning of these words, by the look of deep sympathy she cast on Isabel. After a slight pause she said:

"You, at least, are permitted to soothe the weariness of your father's prison, and have every right to expect that his detention is a mere temporary evil; but I can hardly entertain any delusive hope for mine—nor am I even allowed to share his captivity."

" Better so, Margaret-better so than fret away your heart with that

worst of all pains, a deferred but illusive hope."

"Still," said Margaret, "it is right to hope so long as hope is possible;

and you, Lady Isabel, have such good ground."

"Try not to deceive me—I do not deceive myself. The sword will fall that is suspended over our house. I fear not the moment—it is the intervening space, the trying anxieties, the contradictory emotions—it is the wearing of the spirit—the gradual sinking of the heart—the moral withering away, day by day, hour by hour, which I dread, not the sudden blow that kills at once like the thunderbolt."

"Surely, Lady Isabel, you give way to unnecessary terrors. Had serious danger threatened your father, he would not have thus recklessly

braved it-he would have been warned."

"He was warned," answered Isabel, mournfully; "but the great often trust too much to their greatness, and mistake the voice of warning for a false oracle."

"That error is not confined to the great," replied Margaret; "my

father fell a victim to his rooted belief that insignificance must shield from harm. Mistrust, alas! is too often wisdom."

Isabel's reply was prevented by Lamoral's entrance.

"Any news from Ghent?" demanded his sister, eagerly.

" Alas! no-but our mother has received a condoling letter from the emperor, in which he promises to do his utmost with the king for our The Duchess of Parma promises the same—so do all the princes of our mother's house; but the faith of the latter forbid our expecting much from their interference. The friends of the Count de Horn, too, I hear the Countess of Mansfeldt and many others of his relations have applied personally to the king; but, alas! we must wait long before we can know the result of their measures. What occupies the public mind most at present is a summons from Alba to all the absent nobility to appear at his tribunal. Some have not replied at all, others in a tone such as I would have used in their place. The Prince of Orange's answer has met with general approbation. He pleads the incompetency of such a tribunal to sit in judgment on Knights of the Golden Fleece, and calls upon the king, according to their privileges and statutes, to appear in person to pronounce upon the grave accusations raised against them."

"Will he," demanded Isabel, "grant this request?"

"Therein lies our greatest hope," answered Lamoral; "if he comply with the statute, our father is saved."

"Then, indeed, something like hope is yet left us!" said Isabel.

"Why, many of our house still refuse to entertain any fear," replied Lamoral; "suffer not, dear sister, the usual exaggeration of your feelings to sway you at a time when courage and strength are most needful. Do not make me think you weak."

"I am almost tempted to call you unfeeling," retorted Isabel, with spirit, casting a meaning glance at Margaret. "You forget how many of our friends, in whom we ought to take an interest, even this chance

cannot avail."

"Little, indeed," said Lamoral, "will it avail Liefsdale, Ghysbrecht, and other poor gentlemen of our household; and least of all Casembrot, who was so avowedly a Gueux."

"Do not forget, brother, that but for his fidelity to us, he might now be safe at Dillenburg. The Prince of Orange held him in great esteem,

and wished to take him away."

"Do not think me more heartless than I am, Isabel, nor call me unfeeling, because I speak and think not of these things as you do. Men cannot tremble and mourn like women; what moves you to tears, may goad them to madness. Rage and revenge are bad counsellors, therefore do I sedulously avoid dwelling too much on the wrongs of my country, my friends, and my party. It is not wise in you, Isabel, to rouse passions which I seek, by every means in my power, to curb. If less than justice be done my father, then, then, indeed——"

"Let us not anticipate evil," said Margaret; "and be assured that Lady Isabel is the last person in the world who would wish to involve you

in fresh disasters."

"And yet a new misfortune is about to befal me," said Lamoral, lowering his voice as he approached her. "The gentle influence that of VOL. XXIII.

late has spread a charm even over sorrow, is about to be withdrawn from It was something to temper my angry mood by the more soothing thoughts which you, and the reminiscences of our interviews, inspired. Your society, your friendship, has been the one bright ray that hitherto dispelled gloom from my soul. Thus much, Margaret, I was resolved to tell you before we part; nor do I see aught of harm in it, since you know that I love you. Nay, turn not away your head, nor look so sorrowful; even my gentle sister Isabel holds, you know, the principle, that hopeless love is no crime, and surely, Margaret, despite those eyes now so prudently averted, I have more than once read love in their glances. I appeal to Isabel. You have often said her sentiments might beseem an angel; pray Heaven you may share them on this subject."

' said Isabel, in answer to her brother's appeal, "I still think, and will adhere to my belief through life, that when we entertain an affection, unfortunate, perhaps, but not misplaced, so long as we do not allow our feelings to overcome duty, we need not renounce, nor struggle to renounce, the secret treasure of our bosom; the shades of the cloister, or those of the grave, alike gently cover the sorrows of an innocent heart."

"I am afraid," said Margaret, with a blushing cheek and a trembling voice, "there is more of self-indulgence than of wisdom in the precept. An affection which ought not to be blessed, which the world cannot admit of, is in itself both a folly and a sin."

"So speaks the world," said Isabel, "whose laws and prejudices are ever preached up as duties! Nay, understand me. I am not bold enough to think of braving it; but if I were content to love on without hoping or desiring anything, if such a dream could fill up my existence, why should I attempt to tear from my heart a secret which none have a right to seek there?"

"Because," answered Margaret, firmly, "reason forbids us to live in visions, even should we never be tempted to overstep the boundaries we have prescribed to ourselves; but we may not trust our own frail nature so far, for but few men, I should think, could, if they would, be dreamers."

The discussion was here interrupted by a summons from the duchess.

"I have sent for you, my children," she said, when Isabel and Margaret joined her, "to have a few parting words with you. We meet here, and perhaps even see this place, which has so long been my home, for the last The duke will succeed me here, as everywhere else; but how different the hearts of those who will attend him from yours, my gentle ones, and, above all, how different his own from mine."

" Alas, madam, not only we poor maidens, the whole nation will have

cause to regret bitterly the sad change," said Margaret.

"That I shall be regretted I firmly believe," the regent replied; "and whether this mark of esteem will be due rather to the contrast between me and my successor than to my own merits, is a question I shall not trouble myself to decide, being satisfied that I have acted according to my principles and conscience throughout. Certainly, if I were proud, or ambitious, or had a warlike spirit like my blessed aunt of Hungary, my pride had been humbled, my ambition foiled, my spirit grieved and wounded, to feel power thus withdrawn from me at the moment when I am most able to wield it."

She paused and drew a deep sigh, as, casting her eyes around her, she took a mournful survey of the familiar objects she was about to leave, and

unconsciously gave vent to the sentiments they suggested.

"It is, perhaps, better so. How oft have I wept here the bitterest tears I ever shed! What have I not endured of fatigue, of anxiety, of shame! What bitter resentments, what vain terrors have agitated me! How wearisome that fever of the brain which wastes the body—and yet how know I that inactivity will prove repose? Vain human heart, ever deceived and self-deceiving—restless—who shall tell thy desires?" Suddenly changing her tone, she turned to the young girls, whose presence she had for a moment overlooked.

"I grieve more at departing hence than I could have imagined, for I behold in the future the fair edifice of peace and tranquillity which I have so painfully raised, crumbling into dust. I grieve for many a noble victim—we will hope your father, Isabel, will not be among them. For yours, Margaret, I regret to say I can do nothing; I had not promised so much could I have supposed—but Alba triumphs over me in all

things!" A deep flush passed across her brow.

"His triumph may not be of long duration, madam," said Margaret;

"our hope is in your return."

"I fear that return will be too late to save," said the duchess. "But you, Isabel, though I dare no longer make promises when the power of fulfilling them is withdrawn from me, I bid you to put your trust in those saints whom I have implored in behalf of the count your father. My sympathy for him is sincere—sincerer, perhaps, than you fancy."

"Oh, madam!" said Isabel, no longer able in the fulness of her heart to contain her feelings. "Had you never turned your face from him—had you never doubted his unsullied honour, his unswerving truth, the

Duke of Alba would not have had power over him."

"It is the Prince of Orange's fault," said the duchess, consciencestruck and angry at the deserved reproach. "And were he now at Ghent instead of the noble Egmont, I—I should not have cause to grieve as I now do. He was indeed my bitter enemy! the arch heretic! the cause of all the troubles that have afflicted this country and myself! But we must forgive our enemies," she added, crossing herself devoutly; "and he is beyond our reach. Now kneel, maidens, and let me bless you."

As she imprinted a kiss on each fair brow and murmured a few words

over their young heads, a tear trembled in her eye.

"Rise, and let us away," she continued, her voice faltering with unwonted emotion. "The duke must know nothing of these regrets—

this weakness-and I must not let him wait too long."

The pages and gentlemen in waiting were now called, and Margaret of Parma appeared before them and entered the presence-chamber with all her accustomed stateliness; nor did she suffer the haughty composure she had assumed to be ruffled by Alba's display of pompous courtesy, which was, indeed, but a thin veil to his natural arrogance, and not too nicely adjusted.

As the long cavalcade slowly filed through the palace gates, the marks of sympathy which greeted the duchess from the assembled multitude were so warm and loud as to be well calculated to heal her wounded

pride, and to humble that of the duke who rode beside her; and even whilst complimenting Margaret of Parma upon her popularity, Alba cast looks of such savage threat upon the people, that for a time the acclamations were hushed into silence. But they were renewed on the appearance of a small party of horsemen bearing the colours of Egmont, whose leader was accompanied by a young and beautiful girl, in whom many recognised Countess Isabel. On emerging from the arched gateway they paused for a moment to exchange a last farewell with one for whom several women in the religious habit of the Ursuline convent were waiting to re-conduct her thither.

"But may I not be permitted to see you once more, Margaret—may I not occasionally visit you?" whispered Lamoral; "you are silent, dearest, but I cannot—will not thus renounce you."

Margaret was too much agitated to reply; and before she had recovered from her emotion the beloved form was out of sight, and she was in her turn requested to move forward.

The people now dispersed; but a few groups yet lingered before the palace gazing wistfully on its walls. Their attention was soon attracted by a quantity of wains heavily laden, slowly entering the royal precincts.

"And what may this mean?" said one of the idlers to his nearest neigh-

"There'll be the duke's people," replied the other, "preparing his new quarters in all haste."

"An indecent haste—an indecent haste," said the first speaker, shaking his head discontentedly.

"You may say that, master; haste is the order of the day. They tell me they are about to throw down the ancient hotel of Cuylemburg."

"Jesu-Maria! and wherefore?" exclaimed the first speaker.

"For reasons, neighbour, which the least spoken about the better just

So saying, this prudent personage hurried forward; but in his turn arrested the next acquaintance he chanced to meet, and inquired somewhat anxiously:

"Do.you know the man I was talking to even now?"

"Know him! I thought the whole town knew Van Diest, of Ant-

werp," was the reply.

"By St. Anthony, my patron! had I been aware of that, I would have looked twice to it before I stopped to speak with him in the open street."

"There you are right, neighbour; for a man that has once got into trouble is likely enough to get into it again—so let's be jogging."

"I'm going as far as the hotel of Cuylemburg to take a last look at it—but by St. Anthony! There's Van Diest again—going up the very street—he'll be bound on the same errand, I warrant you; so, if you are with me, neighbour, let's turn into the park and avoid him; besides, God knows how long the pleasure of its walks may be left us."

FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss Julia Addison,

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

CHAPTER L.

He loved but one, And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his. LORD BYRON.

"So, after all, it is Gertrude, and not Florence, that the boy is in love with," said Mr. Harley to himself, as he sat alone in the dining-room after the departure of the ladies. "Well, I am quite content that it should be so. She is a dear, sweet little creature; all feeling, gentleness, and affection; as pretty as Florence in her way, though of such a different style of beauty. I do not know whether I should not have chosen her, as more suited to him than Florence, if they had both been brought before me at once; but somehow, from the first, I set down Pemberton and Florence for each other. I do not believe I can possibly wait till tomorrow before I speak to him. I cannot help thinking that fretting about the affair for another twelve hours will do him more harm than the momentary surprise and agitation my communication will occasion. However, my sister seems so persuaded to the contrary, that I dare not disobey her. Besides, with all those ladies round him, I should find it very difficult, perhaps impossible, to get a tête-à-tête with him this evening."

Although Pemberton did his best to appear cheerful, and with tolerable success, whilst with the rest of the party, he could not help feeling more melancholy and depressed in spirits than he ever had before. He passed a sleepless night, and the next morning felt so unwell that he was quite unable to rise until a late hour in the afternoon.

"What can have made him worse again, Mr. Harley?" asked Florence, anxiously, as luncheon finished, she was taking a few turns up and down the gravel walk, leaning upon the old gentleman's arm.

"How should I know?" he replied, almost smiling, to Florence's great surprise. "To own the truth," he resumed, after a moment's pause, "I do half suspect what it is that has made him worse."

"Do you?" said Florence. "Did we talk to him too much yesterday

evening? Was he over-excited?"

Mr. Harley shook his head. "If I mistake not," he said, "it is love that is the cause of this relapse. In fact, he has told me plainly that he is in love with your pretty little friend there. Now, tell me candidly, as a friend deeply interested in his happiness, do you think it is likely his suit would be favourably received?"

Florence was silent for some moments, and then replied, "I have no reason to think otherwise. She once told me, when we were speaking of him, that she thought him more agreeable than any other young man of

her acquaintance."

"That is good," said Mr. Harley. "And do you think there would

be any grounds of objection on the part of her parents?"

"I fear there would be one," was the answer. "I have myself heard Mrs. Mumford declare that she would never consent to any of her daughters marrying a man who was not rich. By the rather curious will of an eccentric bachelor uncle, Gertrude and her sisters on respectively attaining their majority, come into possession of 500l. a year each, which annuity, in case of their marrying, is to be forfeited, and employed in the erection and support of almshouses for single women."

"A very curious will, indeed," said Mr. Harley; "and Mrs. Mumford is a sensible woman. But suppose Pemberton was in possession of 1000l. a year, do you not think she would consent to Gertrude's giving up the 500l. in perspective, especially as it must be three years before she will

be entitled to it?"

"I have no doubt she would," said Florence. "But I fear," she added, "that Mr. Pemberton is not at all likely to become rich, for he has four elder brothers, and the present Lord Swellington has six sons."

"He will never be Lord Swellington," said Mr. Harley; "I do not But I have reason to think that he will come into a fortune mean that.

However, do not say a word of all this to Gertrude." some day.

"Well, my dear Pemberton," said Mr. Harley, sitting down beside him on the sofa, when they were left alone together, about half an hour after the invalid came down stairs, "you thought me very unfeeling yesterday concerning your affaire de cœur, did you not?"

"Allow me to remind you, sir," said Pemberton, gravely, "that you have forgotten your promise."

"That promise," said Mr. Harley, "I must beg you to absolve me

"Really, sir," said Pemberton, with some warmth of manner, "excuse my saying that you make me repent having indulged your curiosity."

"But what if I could help you?" persisted Mr. Harley.

"You know, sir, as well as I do," cried Pemberton, "that that is quite impossible."

"I do not know any such thing," rejoined the old gentleman.

"Perhaps, sir," said Pemberton, "you have forgotten what I had the

honour to tell you yesterday, or confused ---- "

"No, no," interrupted Mr. Harley, laughing, "I have confused matters pretty well in this business, but I am in no confusion now. You look as if you thought I was crazy."

"I think you wish to make me so, sir," said Pemberton, restlessly shifting his position on the sofa; "and I really feel extremely unwell

this afternoon."

"Pemberton, listen to me," said Mr. Harley, with more seriousness than he had hitherto displayed. "I am not going to speak on the interdicted subject; but I beg that you will favour me with your attention for a few minutes."

The young man bowed his head, and Mr. Harley continued:

"Your mother was the only woman who ever touched my heart. In fact, I was desperately in love with her; and she (for I had it from her own lips) responded to my affection. Her parents sanctioned my suit,

for I was the only son of a man of good family, large fortune, and a member of Parliament; and I was as young, and (incredible as it may seem) nearly as handsome as you are now. We were engaged to each other-this was in the spring-and were to be married in the ensuing autumn. I see, by your look of surprise, that you never heard of this before. I am not astonished; I should, indeed, be more so if you had. Well, it happened that at Midsummer there was a large public ball at York, which was attended by all the families of importance in the county; and by most of the officers of the -th regiment, which, as you know, was your father's. Your mother was the belle of the room; and Lord Swellington, as I afterwards heard (for a badly-sprained ankle prevented my being present), was evidently much captivated with her. He paid her the most flattering attentions, scarcely danced with any one else, and appeared to have neither eyes nor ears but for her. A few days afterwards he called, and made formal proposals for her hand to her father, who being-I must say it-an ambitious and heartless man, resolved at once to compel his daughter to break off her engagement with me, and accept the offers of her noble admirer; although he was a widower with nine children, and nearly twenty years older than herself. She resisted for a time-for I believe she really loved me-but at length, wearied by the constant importunities of her parents, she consented.

"I am not going to weary you with an account of my feelings," continued Mr. Harley, after a short pause, which his auditor did not break. "I cannot even now recal them with composure. It is enough to say that on recovering from a violent brain fever into which our last interview—for I would not believe the fatal truth until I heard it from her own lips—had thrown me, the first intelligence which reached my ears was that they were married. From that time I was an altered man. All that had before interested me had lost its charm. My temper became irritable and impatient. For a brief period I sought to find a cure for the wounds of my heart in the turmoil of public life and the excitement of ambition. But it was useless. The animating spark which had once made me ambitious, was extinguished for ever; my energy

was gone, my spirit crushed-

"I retired from the world; and sought relief in solitude and the consolations of religion. By the death of my father, about a year after my terrible affliction, I had succeeded to a large property—the estates in Yorkshire I immediately sold, not being able to bear the associations connected with them—and fixed myself in this retreat. The death of my surviving parent, soon afterwards, caused my sister to seek a home in my house. We had always been, and still are, deeply attached to each other, and her kindness and sympathy in some measure reconciled me to life again. But I could never bring myself to re-enter the world, or engage afresh in active life; I became prematurely aged—you will, perhaps, scarcely credit me when I tell you that I am not yet sixty years old—and great care and extreme temperance have alone prevented me from becoming a confirmed valetudinarian.

"You will wonder, no doubt, why I tell you this long story. You shall not remain much longer in suspense. Since that dreadful interview which put an end to all my hopes of happiness in this world, I have never seen your mother. I studiously shunned every place where it was pos-

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be any grounds of objection on the part of her parents?"

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The young man bowed his head, and Mr. Harley continued:

"Your mother was the only woman who ever touched my heart. In fact, I was desperately in love with her; and she (for I had it from her own lips) responded to my affection. Her parents sanctioned my suit,

for I was the only son of a man of good family, large fortune, and a member of Parliament; and I was as young, and (incredible as it may seem) nearly as handsome as you are now. We were engaged to each other-this was in the spring-and were to be married in the ensuing autumn. I see, by your look of surprise, that you never heard of this before. I am not astonished; I should, indeed, be more so if you had. Well, it happened that at Midsummer there was a large public ball at York, which was attended by all the families of importance in the county; and by most of the officers of the --- th regiment, which, as you know, was your father's. Your mother was the belle of the room; and Lord Swellington, as I afterwards heard (for a badly-sprained ankle prevented my being present), was evidently much captivated with her. He paid her the most flattering attentions, scarcely danced with any one else, and appeared to have neither eyes nor ears but for her. A few days afterwards he called, and made formal proposals for her hand to her father, who being-I must say it-an ambitious and heartless man, resolved at once to compel his daughter to break off her engagement with me, and accept the offers of her noble admirer; although he was a widower with nine children, and nearly twenty years older than herself. She resisted for a time—for I believe she really loved me—but at length, wearied by the constant importunities of her parents, she consented.

"I am not going to weary you with an account of my feelings," continued Mr. Harley, after a short pause, which his auditor did not break. "I cannot even now recal them with composure. It is enough to say that on recovering from a violent brain fever into which our last interview—for I would not believe the fatal truth until I heard it from her own lips—had thrown me, the first intelligence which reached my ears was that they were married. From that time I was an altered man. All that had before interested me had lost its charm. My temper became irritable and impatient. For a brief period I sought to find a cure for the wounds of my heart in the turmoil of public life and the excitement of ambition. But it was useless. The animating spark which had once made me ambitious, was extinguished for ever; my energy

was gone, my spirit crushed-

"I retired from the world; and sought relief in solitude and the consolations of religion. By the death of my father, about a year after my terrible affliction, I had succeeded to a large property—the estates in Yorkshire I immediately sold, not being able to bear the associations connected with them—and fixed myself in this retreat. The death of my surviving parent, soon afterwards, caused my sister to seek a home in my house. We had always been, and still are, deeply attached to each other, and her kindness and sympathy in some measure reconciled me to life again. But I could never bring myself to re-enter the world, or engage afresh in active life; I became prematurely aged—you will, perhaps, scarcely credit me when I tell you that I am not yet sixty years old—and great care and extreme temperance have alone prevented me from becoming a confirmed valetudinarian.

"You will wonder, no doubt, why I tell you this long story. You shall not remain much longer in suspense. Since that dreadful interview which put an end to all my hopes of happiness in this world, I have never seen your mother. I studiously shunned every place where it was pos-

sible I could meet her. Such are my feelings that I do not believe I could even now see her with composure. But it is strange enough that I have often longed to see you, and have lately had a strong presentiment that my wish would one day be gratified. I had heard you spoken of in the highest terms by several individuals; and I determined that if, upon strict investigation, I found these reports correct, I would make you my heir. Now, for the last twenty years I have scarcely spent a fourth of my income, and I can, therefore, without the slightest inconvenience, put you in possession of a thousand a year immediately on your marriage, which, joined to your own income, will, I hope, enable you to live in comfort, if not in affluence."

He ceased speaking; but it was some moments before Pemberton could sufficiently recover from the various emotions caused by his words

to reply.

"My dear sir," he commenced at length, "your history fills me with the deepest pity and sympathy. For your most kind and generous intentions to myself I am sincerely grateful; but, indeed, I cannot——"

"You cannot do what?" cried Mr. Harley, interrupting him. "You cannot consent to allow an unhappy old man the pleasure and gratification of witnessing the happiness to which he has contributed? You would prefer waiting till he is no more before you enjoy yourself, and make his death the signal for the commencement of your good fortune."

"Do not-pray do not speak in that manner!" exclaimed Pemberton,

with a look of great distress.

"I wish but to make you reasonable," said Mr. Harley, kindly. "I was going to tell you that I have not a near relation in the world except my sister, who is handsomely provided for. She has been made aware of my design with regard to you, and is as anxious as myself to see it carried into execution. On my death she will come into some thousands which I have left entirely at her own disposal, as also this house and grounds, in addition to her own fortune; and you will then receive the remainder of the fortune destined for you. To set your mind quite at ease, the whole of what I now and at my death give to you, would—if upon investigation your character had not pleased me—have been divided among six public charities. So now you cannot possibly have any scruples; and now I hope you will exonerate me from my promise, and suffer me to speak of Gertrude without accusing me of wishing to drive you crazy."

He took his young companion's hand in his own, and looked at him with an expression of such kindness and affection as completely overset Pemberton's small remaining firmness. He struggled hard to speak for some moments, and then leaning back on the sofa, burst into tears.

"Come, come, my dear boy," said the old gentleman, his own eyes almost overflowing as he spoke; "this will never do, you must not agi-

tate yourself thus."

"It is very weak, I know," said Pemberton, suppressing his emotion; but the painful interest with which I have listened to your story, the sudden change in my own prospects, and above all, your touching kindness, quite overcomes me. My illness has made me weak, I suppose," he added, in a faltering voice, "for I cannot yet find words or power to express what I feel, or how much——"

"You have more than sufficiently thanked me," returned Mr. Harley, "for what in fact I deserve but few thanks, since in arranging this little affair I have consulted my own happiness full as much as yours. So now let us think and talk about Gertrude, whom you shall see as soon as you are sufficiently composed. You must really try and tranquillise yourself," he added, with some anxiety of manner, "for your hand is still very feverish."

"I must soon be well, dear sir," said Pemberton, hopefully, for his natural buoyancy of spirits never long deserted him. "If I was dying,

such joyful news would bring me to life again."

"That is right—that is right!" cried his kind-hearted benefactor, looking at him fondly. "Spoken like yourself. And it does my heart good to see a gleam of one of your own bright smiles again. Do you feel strong enough to speak to Gertrude now?"

The colour came and went in the lover's cheek.

"If after all she should reject me?" he said. But, as he spoke, something at his heart whispered that he was not wholly indifferent to the sweet girl he loved so tenderly, and that his affection would not be unrequited.

Soon afterwards, Mr. Harley having found Gertrude in the garden, helping his sister to tie up some rose-trees, informed her that Pemberton

wished to speak to her for a few minutes.

"He bade me apologise," continued the old gentleman, "for asking you to go to him, instead of coming to you himself, but his illness must plead his excuse. No, indeed, you must go alone," added Mr. Harley, observing that Gertrude, blushing and hesitating, waited for him to accompany her; "I can answer for it, that the subject on which he wishes to speak to you is not a formidable one."

"You must indulge him, my dear, as he is an invalid," said Miss

Harley, smiling kindly. "I will wait for you here."

Blushing still more, Gertrude slowly departed, perplexing herself as she went with innumerable conjectures as to what Pemberton could pos-

sibly want to say to her.

To her timid inquiry, Pemberton replied by declaring his love. Gertrude did not attempt to disguise that his affection was not unrequited; and when seated by his sofa, with her hand clasped in his, she listened while he explained to her how Mr. Harley's kindness had placed him in a position to offer her a home suited to her station in life, and how this one consideration alone had prevented him from asking her to marry him, it is difficult to say whether she or Pemberton was the happiest. Time passed unheeded, until the lovers, much to their astonishment, were apprised by the striking of the clock on the mantelpiece, that more than two hours had elapsed. Gertrude hastily started up, saying that she must return to Miss Harley, who was waiting for her, and would wonder at her long absence.

"Let her wait ten minutes longer, dearest Gertrude," said Pemberton. "She is well and strong, and enjoying the fresh air and flowers, and the society of agreeable friends; whilst I, ill, and weak, and suffering, am confined to a sofa. You cannot have the heart to refuse me the happiness

of ten minutes more of your society!"

Gertrude could not resist this a peal, and the ten minutes had lengthened into half an hour before he would suffer her to depart. She

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of ten minutes more of your society!"

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set out, intending to seek Miss Harley, which intention, however, was forgotten, or abandoned, before she was half across the hall, as she found it impossible to wait a moment longer before she communicated what had passed to Florence. Most sincerely did Florence rejoice in her friend's happiness, and the two girls were still sitting in Florence's dressing-room with their arms affectionately twined round each other, conversing earnestly, when the sound of a horse's hoofs attracted their attention.

"It cannot surely be Mr. Wilson galloping so violently," said Gertrude, running to the window. "No, it is not him. It is some one I have seen before, though I cannot recollect when or where. Do look,

Florence!"

Florence rose in compliance with this request, but before she could reach the window the subject of Gertrude's observation was concealed from view by the shrubbery.

The two girls resumed their seats and their discourse, and quickly for-

got the interruption.

ON THE BANKS OF A BEAUTIFUL RIVER.

BY J. E. CARPENTER.

On the banks of a beautiful river,

How sweet 'tis in summer to stray;

Where the willows in melody quiver,

And in gladness the stream glides away;

Where the breeze sings a song in the rushes,

That the waves echo still as they flow,

While the tide rocks the stem, as it gushes,

Of the lily that's sleeping below.

On the banks of a beautiful river,
How sweet 'tis to gaze on the tide;
Like Life flowing onwards for ever,
Or man in the noon of his pride;
To feel, as the sunshine smiles o'er us,
How gloomy life's current would be—
Had we not a haven before us
Beyond dark futurity's sea!

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSON'S GREAT BALLOON ASCENT.

ALTHOUGH Bell's Life is certainly a very entertaining and valuable paper, still it is not exactly the sort of article which allows repeated perusal. I had for the fourth time waded through the list of racing prophets, whose name is legion, and was wondering there could be such precious fools in the world as to make it worth their while to expend so much money in advertisements. I had also interested myself in the columns headed "Aquatic" and "Canine;" in short, had rendered myself perfectly au fait in all the sporting news of the week. I had smoked an indefinite number of pipes, and was already entering into my usual argument between laziness and profit, as to whether I should dress myself and go about my bread-winning avocations, when a violent rat-tat at the front-door set me on a new train of thought. I conjectured that it was probably some one to see the two-pair back, which had been vacant since the last lodger, a medical student, nearly set the house on fire by persisting on smoking in bed. Oh, that two-pair back! what a history I could write about it, or rather, about all the tenants that have occupied it—Irish M.P.'s, German students, French chevaliers, Poles, betting gents-but, bless my soul, the "party" is knocking again!

The door was speedily opened, and all my conjectures put a stop to. A scuffling noise and tittering, commingled with faint cries of "Ha' done, do, Mr. Johnson, you ought to be ashamed of yourself—that you did,"

sufficiently informed me that it was a visitor for myself.

I rushed on to the stairs to prevent this scandalous scene from being continued, or else—for who can fathom weak mortal's motives—because I did not wish any one to poach on my manors, for I had a *tendre* for the victim, my landlady's daughter Sarah Jane, and greeted my old friend with a mixture of pleasure and reproach.

"Now you needn't be afraid," he cried, on seeing me, "Sally and I are old acquaintances—ain't we now?" accompanying this remark by a

squeeze of the fair maiden's somewhat overplump arm.

"Go along—you ought to be ashamed of such goings on!" I heard my landlady's shrill voice ejaculating from the penetralia of the kitchen;

a remark in which I cordially responded.

An offer to send for some of the peculiar half-and-half from round the corner was the tempting bait by which I lured Mr. William Johnson into my sitting-room. When we were fairly under weigh with our pipes and beer, my assistant in the cloud-compelling process began to unfold the

dread purport of his visit.

It appeared that Mrs. William had left town for a few weeks for the benefit of her health, and would not return till the occasion of the "Juke's" funeral. Under these circumstances the other half of the matrimonial firm had, to use his own expression, "been knocking about on the loose." During his post-prandial rambles he had fallen in with an aëronaut, with whom, over a fabulous amount of glasses of gin-and-water, he had vowed eternal friendship; so much so that he had expressed his willingness to risk his neck, if not for him, still with him, by making a grand ascent that evening from the well known Convolvolus Gardens.

Up to this point Mr. Johnson had spoken fluently enough, but, as soon

as he got so far, I noticed he began to hesitate and look earnestly at me; at length he went off with renewed vigour to offer me the fourth place in the car. I had half-opened my mouth for a resolute refusal, when he stopped me by adding: "So come and dine with me at Verrey's, and we'll

go to the gardens comfortably together."

This idea seemed an excellent one; but then the unlucky ascent was coupled with it; was the bargain a fair one?—risk my neck for a dinner; yet soldiers let themselves be shot at for a shilling a day; then, besides the éclat of going up in a balloon, I should cut out that bothering Jones, who was always boasting of his descent into a salt mine, thousands in the gardens would witness my departure, and, who knows, perhaps take me for the great aëronaut himself——? My reverie was cruelly interrupted by Mr. Johnson:

"There, young fellow, there's a chance for you; you can soar into the boundless realms of space, as Signor Smitherini calls it, and all free

gratis for nothin'; you'll never have such a chance again -- "

"Of breaking my neck," I interrupted.

"Oh, stuff! I'm not afraid to go; and see what I'd lose by breaking my neck; there's my house and my estate, my little terrier Fan, and then there's Mrs. William—though that wouldn't be such a frightful loss,"

he added, sotto voce.

My readers may probably remember that, in a former paper, I mentioned Mr. Johnson's obliquity in regarding a villa and a paddock as a house and estate; but there are many like him in this world. After a few pro's and con.'s, I consented to become a partner in this visit to the clouds, and parted from Mr. William Johnson under the express stipulation that he should provide plenty of wrappers, &c., for our aërial journey, and a quantum suff. of creature comforts. To this he willingly assented, for, I think, in his heart he was very glad I accompanied him (although he did not say so), probably through that selfish feeling which deprives a

daring act of half its danger, if shared by some one we know.

My readers will, perhaps, like to be told how I spent the intervening time, and I am willing to tell them; but, in the first place, I must inform them what I did not do. Imprimis, then, I did not make my will; for, to let them into the secret, I had nothing to leave, except a variety of bachelor's odds and ends, which would, perhaps, cover the rent I owed. Nor did I write tender farewells to my relatives, commencing, "By the time you receive this; &c.," and enclosing a lock of my hair—for I had a shrewd suspicion the greater part of them would not be disinclined to hear of the melancholy event, as it would remove a considerable drain on their respective purses. I had, it is true, some idea at first of writing to my tailor, cordwainer, &c., for I was certain that if anything inopportune happened to shorten my days, each would, in all sincerity, regret the loss of his little bill. However, I gave up the notion, for I did not wish to make them uncomfortable, and, besides, if all came off "serenely," they would be sure to come and congratulate me the next day, and I had my own reasons for not desiring their visits.

Such being the case, I proceeded to do what I consider the most sensible thing I could have done. I filled my largest pipe, sat down in my arm-chair, and indulged in rosy visions of what we should have for

dinner.

I must here parenthetically observe, that on the auspicious event of our dining together at any restaurant's, Mr. William Johnson always left the ordering of the repast to me, as he knew, by woeful experience, that his essays in that line were generally alarming failures; in fact—the French always licked him.

I am perfectly well aware that many of my readers will condemn me for such thoughts—with a perilous adventure before me, I should have prepared myself for the worst—but, then, why need I trouble myself about evils that I knew not of, when I had it in my power to indulge in

such balmy visions of "a glorious feed."

Be this as it may, I proceeded to dress myself leisurely after finishing my cogitations, and met Mr. Johnson at "sharp five" beneath Verrey's hospitable roof. I soon drew up my bill of fare, with one of those peculiar pencils that never appear to be cut, and I will quote it here, as some justification for my profane thoughts. "Julienne" soup—salmon "grillé en papilottes"—"cotelettes de mouton à la Soubise"—"noix de veau à l'oseille"—"omelette soufflée," and "a brace of grouse"—the process of deglutition aided by chablis and champagne. A couple of bottles of cool Burgundy over our filberts made us regard everything en couleur de rose. A cab was speedily chartered, in which ourselves and a half-dozen basket of champagne were conveyed to the Convolvolus Gardens.

On our arrival, we found the balloon inflated, and the signor awaiting us with much impatience. A series of introductions now took place between myself, the signor, and an American gentleman, a collaborateur in

the aërial field, who was to accompany us on our voyage.

There is something very animating and pleasing about a balloon just before its ascent; the huge bag is all impatience to be off, and yet so equipoised that a finger will keep it down. Add to this the spectators and the music, and it may be easily imagined that our enthusiasm soon rose to fever heat, though, perhaps, the wine we had at dinner may have had some effect. The ballast was soon arranged in proper order, the champagne duly placed in the bottom of the car, and the four "intrepid aëronauts," to use the newspaper pet phrase, took their seats. The band very appropriately struck up the "Aëronauts' Polka," we slipped down the liberating iron, and the earth rapidly left us. I say advisedly the earth left us, for nothing would have induced me to believe that, for the first few minutes, the balloon moved at all. In a very short time, however, we found ourselves in the clouds—literally so, for we felt cold and uncomfortable. When we had attained our maximum height, the captain of the vessel let out some gas, and we gradually sank until we again gained another glimpse of mother earth. We then floated calmly but rapidly along over London, and apparently in the direction of Greenwich. I need not describe the effect of this bird's-eye panorama—it has already been "done" by abler pens than mine; suffice it to say, that a most exquisite feeling possessed me. I did not feel the least giddy, nor, strange to say, at all nervous; in fact, I completely forgot my situation in the enjoyment of the wonderful landscape stretched out beneath me.

The first bottle of champagne was now tapped, and festivity became "the order of the day," or rather of the twilight, that was rapidly enfold-

ing us.

On one occasion he informed us his balloon had burst when at an altitude of nearly two miles, but, fortunately, the lower part turned up neatly into the upper, forming a parachute, in which he descended with perfect safety. To convince himself that this was not the mere result of chance, on his very next ascent he purposely burst his balloon, and found precisely the same result attending the experiment. He even offered to repeat it on this occasion, but, to his great disgust, both Mr. W. Johnson and myself showed the white feather alarmingly, and even the signor, I have a shrewd suspicion, did not seem to care about it, though of course, in the presence of a confrère, it would not do for him to display any hesitation. He therefore contented himself with remarking:

"Yes, yes, certainement, it is one very sure experience, and I have no doubt parfaitement successful in the Etats Unis—what you call the States United. Mais enfin, I do not see any necessity to injure my ballon, mon ami, especially as I have to make another ascension on Wednesday."

With this the matter dropped, the American gent consoling himself with a huge plug of tobacco, and internally condemning the want of go-ahead-ism, which led apathetic Englishmen to decline his brilliant offer.

As the conversation had now turned upon accidents, it was only natural that it should proceed upon the same interesting topic; our French pilot narrated with much impressiveness and emotion the fate of Captain Harris and Miss Stocks, of Lieutenant Gale devoured by wolves in France, and last, though not least, his own narrow escape during the preceding summer.

Let us give his own graphic description:

"I made an engagement to make an ascent from the Champs Elysées last July. Two students of the 'Ecole de Médecine, with their cheres amies, agreed to accompany me, and, nom d'une pipe, before starting, they took leave of all their acquaintances of the Quartier Latin in Vin de Maçon, corrected by a soupçon d'eau de vie. We were all what you call 'mops and brooms' before starting, and when we had gained a considerable height, one of the students pulled out his pipe and began to light it. I saw the danger, and warned him against the gas escaping from the mouth—and what do you imagine they did? They tied their handkerchiefs together, and fastened up the mouth of the balloon. The consequence may be easily conjectured—the balloon immediately rose to an immense height, and when all were joining in the refrain of 'Drin—drin,' we suddenly heard a bang—bang—"

Bang—bang—at this moment also sounded above our own heads. Mr. William Johnson immediately cried out, "By Jove, the balloon's burst," and even I was rather apprehensive that the American's experiment was

about to be tried, malgré bongré, on our persons.

"Soyez tranquille," the signor said, with a calm smile that immediately reassured us, "it is merely the silk being stretched out by the expansion of the gas. But in our case the balloon did really explode; but Providence has ever a tender regard for drunken men, and we all reached the ground unhurt."

The champagne was, by this time, nearly all consumed, and it was growing very dark; so we proposed revisiting mother earth. For this purpose the signor let off a vast quantity of gas, and we soon had the pleasure of seeing London's lights grow larger and more distinct. I happened to look over the side of the car, and noticed a silvery thread beneath me, which I conjectured must be the Thames, and into which we appeared to be rapidly descending. The wind, in the mean time, had been gradually freshening, and now blew in fitful gusts, which threatened anything but an agreeable finale to our evening's entertainment. The signor now seized his speaking-trumpet, and entrusted the valve-line to the American. His first hail met with no response, but the second was more successful, at least if this inference may be drawn from a rough "Aye, aye, I'm a looking at yer, man!" The signor now threw out the grappling-iron, which appeared to hold, for we descended towards the earth with great rapidity. At this moment I was rather surprised at seeing the signor and the American suddenly climb up and seat themselves on the hoop, but, before I had time to demand an explanation, I felt a sudden shock, which nearly knocked all my senses out of me, and "precipitate the twain accosted earth." Up flew the balloon again, only to come down to the ground with another pounding jolt.

This agreeable pastime was repeated some five or six times, when, suddenly, to our great surprise, we found ourselves floating along at a tremendous rate across fields. The grapnel had become unhitched, and before the signor could draw it in again, and make another cast, both Mr. Johnson and myself had full cause to regret our hardihood in ever wishing to bid the stars a friendly good evening. Our first rencontre was with a huge haystack, which we, fortunately, only grazed; but that was enough to give a serious shock to our digestive organs. We must then have passed through a horsepond, or something very like it, for the car became filled with a fluid of the colour and consistence of pea-soup, which ruined my best tr-u-s-rs. At length the signor succeeded in drawing the grapnel in again, which he then threw out with many polyglot curses, and this brought us up. Several agricultural youths made their appearance from a neighbouring farm-house, seized hold of the car, and we all crawled out, considerably the worse for our trip. Our sufferings, however, had only commenced, for, while the signor and the American were attending to the balloon, and suffering the gas to escape, I found myself suddenly seized on either side by brawny hands. looking at Mr. William Johnson to aid me by his pugilistic prowess, I found him exactly in the same predicament. In vain we implored and threatened by turns; the clods turned a deaf ear to both, and insisted on taking us to "Maaster." We were, therefore, dragged away most reluctantly to the farm-house, and put upon our trial before the worthy agriculturist, who appeared in a state of concentrated fury. We straightway protested against this most unexpected and unwarrantable attack

upon unoffending citizens, but soon learned the "reason why" of our capture. Our friend the farmer informed us, that five or six balloons had lately dropped in his fields, and caused considerable damage to his fences, &c., and he had registered a vow to seize the very next aërial traveller who visited him, and make him pay for the damage his predecessors had done. In vain we urged that we were only "Amateurs"-in vain we begged him to make the signor responsible for the damage done. "Them ballooning chaps have never got any money," he gave it as his opinion, "and you seem the right sort for me; so pay you must, or I'll have you locked up to-night, and took afore the squire to-morrow In fact, the agricultural mind could not be turned from its marning." purpose, and nothing was left us but what Disraeli offered the Protectiondesiring farmers-a compromise. After a considerable amount of haggling, the farmer offered to let us off for the sum of five pounds in ready cash; and need I say that my worthy friend Mr. Johnson was the victim? With many heavy sighs at his misfortunes, he undid his

purse-strings, and gave up "the yellow glittering gold."

These preliminary transactions being satisfactorily settled, the worthy farmer regained his serenity of mind, invited us to supper, and, to show that he bore no animosity, sent out to request "t'other two chaps," as he expressively termed them, "to coom in." But the birds had flown, probably not liking the aspect of matters, and carrying off the balloon, in a cart they had hired, to the neighbouring railway station. messengers sent in search of them were followed by a variety of unwashed ploughboys, &c., all vociferating for beer-money, which "the furrin cove had promised 'em the fat chap oop at farm ood pay 'em." For the second time, therefore, Mr. William had to pull out his purse and settle these fresh demands. Our farming friend was, however, on the whole a very jolly fellow; he gave us an excellent supper, which we stood much in need of, with plenty of his best October. After the repast he also indulged us with a variety of plaintive ditties, in the true rustic style; that is to say, to no particular tune, except an amalgamation of "God save the Queen," with the popular melody currently supposed to have occasioned a premature decease to a member of the vaccine tribe.

Mr. William Johnson, as usual, did the agreeable to the feminines, and seemed to be perfectly successful in his attempts, for there was plenty of giggling in various dark corners of the room. At length the farmer proposed driving us over to the railway station to catch the last train; to which we assented. He took leave of us there very heartily, and hoped to have the pleasure of seeing us again soon; to which Bill replied:

"Not to my knowledge, old feller! at least not in the way I came to-night. I ain't got no currant-bushes with five-pound notes a-growing on 'em."

On entering the station the first persons we saw were our compagnons de voyage; and, indeed, they were "objects" to all intents and purposes. Bill was at first disposed to treat them with silent contempt, but he could not refrain from evincing his sympathy when the signor explained to him the cause of his woeful plight. It appeared that, in their joy at escaping from the clutches of the farmer and his merry men, they had pulled up at an inn, and indulged in potations deep and strong—so deep, in fact,

that the driver of their vehicle began seeing, not double, but sideways, for he drove them into a pond nicely covered with duckweed instead of keeping to the main road. In this déméler the signor had lost his handsome gold-lace bound cap, and received various contusions on his os frontis, which did not at all improve his personal appearance. Mr. William Johnson, therefore, thought he had been sufficiently punished for his base desertion, and offered him the right hand of fellowship. The train soon came up, and we all took our seats, after placing the balloon in the break van.

On arriving in town we drove to the Convolvolus Gardens, and got rid of the balloon and our companions; the signor, on parting, mysteriously hinting he would call and settle that little matter immediately, and carefully putting Mr. Johnson's address down in his pocket-book. William and myself then honoured the Cyder Cellars with a visit, and I cannot say how many glasses of brandy-and-water we drank, or, in fact,

anything as to how we reached home.

The next morning, however, I was roused from sleep by a discreet rap at my bedroom door, and received an intimation that "A gent wished to speak to me." Running into the sitting-room in my dressing-gown, I found Bill there fast asleep on a sofa, and standing near him-a tall policeman. He soon enlightened me as to the purpose of his calling; he and a confrère had found myself and partner rolling along the street in a very helpless condition, and thought it safer to take us to the station-house. When we got there, however, we made such an iniquitous disturbance that it roused the other déténus from their slumbers, who immediately joined actively in the row. They found my card-case in my pocket, and, very glad to get rid of us, they took us both to my house, where they propped us up against the door, after giving two or three violent knocks -" such was his plain, unvarnished tale."

A few shillings soon settled the affair, and got rid of my visitor, when we restored ourselves to something like life by imbibing considerable quantities of Bass, not having any fear before our eyes as to the "un-

guarded remarks," &c.

I need only add that, though Mr. William Johnson has been repeatedly solicited by the signor to make the fourth man in another aërial trip, and so work out the five pounds, no persuasion on earth will ever again make him go through the miseries of another "Great Balloon Ascent."

ITALIANS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

A LECTURE.*

BY W. M. TARTT, Esq.

The subjects to which I am about to claim your attention, are connected with the social and political aspects of Italy during the latter half of the Fifteenth Century; and they will be chiefly illustrated by incidents from the life of one of the distinguished scholars who then took part in its affairs. For this purpose, it is not necessary to enter into particulars which merely refer to his biography. Though we are never wearied by such details, when dwelling upon the lives of those with whose works we are already familiar—as all have felt while lingering over the memoirs of a Scott, a Southey, a Chalmers, or a Moore—it would be difficult to excite a similar interest, when the individual is unknown, even by name, to many of those whom we are addressing.

In the centuries which immediately succeeded his death, the subject of these remarks was mentioned with frequent praise by about thirty writers, of more or less authority in literary history; and his works went through various editions; but the changes in knowledge, and in taste, have now almost thrown him into oblivion. So true is the observation of one of the great fathers of English prose, that, of all who have striven for earthly immortality, few are remembered, except "in the register of God."

The philosopher, statesman, orator, poet, and historian of whom I am about to speak-for in him the whole of these characters were combined —is known to us as Pandolfo Collenuccio. He held office under the Sforzas, lords of Pesaro; one of whom was even indebted to him for his throne. You are aware that several of the states of Romagna were at that time held as fiefs under the Church, and it was not unsatisfactory to the popes, when, from failure of issue, or from any other cause of forfeiture, they lapsed to the Holy See. It afforded a convenient mode of providing for members of the papal family, who could not decently be acknowledged as sons. In the case before us, the reigning pontiff had withheld the investiture of Pesaro from Giovanni Sforza (on his father's death) upon the ground of illegitimacy; and it was by the skilful diplomacy of the eloquent scholar, his faithful minister, that the sovereignty was finally conceded to him. These services were rewarded by a despotic prince by sending the servant to whom he was so deeply indebted into exile, and finally to death; not for any crime that he had committed, but by one of those perversions of law and justice of which a fatal example has recently been witnessed in the religious persecutions at Florence.

My object in asking you to accompany me while following him into exile, is to bring before you his occupations, and the offices which he held elsewhere, as illustrations of the state of society at the period to which we refer.

Previous to its stormy close, Italy had enjoyed an interval of political tranquillity to which she had been little accustomed. This has been attributed generally, and very justly, to the wisdom and the influence of Lorenzo de' Medici. "It is only to be regretted," says his able and distinguished biographer, whom I have the pride and gratification of remem-

^{*} Delivered at the Literary and Philosophical Institution, Cheltenham.

bering as one of my earliest literary friends—"it is only to be regretted that these prosperous days were of such short duration." "The fabric of public happiness erected by the vigilance, and preserved by the constant care of Lorenzo, remained, indeed, firm and compact during the short remainder of his days; but, at his death, it dissolved like the work of enchantment, and overwhelmed for a time in its ruins even the descendants of its founder."

In literary history, it was an epoch made memorable rather by learning than by genius. At its commencement, more than a hundred years had elapsed since Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio had burst upon the mental night of Italy. At its close, Ariosto's magnificent poem had not been published; Tasso's Christian epic was to shed its lustre upon the century which followed; and to Macchiavelli it merely gave birth. It is true that it could claim, with a few others, Leonardo da Vinci, great in many arts, and, in one of them, amongst the greatest; but these were the exceptions.

It was distinctively the age of scholars, statesmen, and military chiefs. It was a period rather of revival than of creation. The taste for Greek and Roman literature, which originated in a previous century, had been encouraged and extended by the learned men who took refuge in Italy, upon the fall of Constantinople, and had become the engrossing and dominant pursuit. The manuscripts, which were the perishable record of the great works of antiquity, were diligently sought and cherished, and were thus saved from destruction at the very moment when the invention of printing supplied the means of preserving them for ever. Everything combined to imbue the age with a scholastic character. There was never a period at which the man of letters took so prominent a part in the affairs of state. He was at once the master and the slave of the tyrant whom he served. The language of ancient Rome was then the usual medium of diplomatic intercourse; and, though the transition from the council-chamber to the dungeon was brief and frequent, the acquirements of the scholar were still the surest path to the most important offices.

The banished minister was not long, therefore, without a patron. He found an asylum at the court of the chivalrous and accomplished Duke Ercole of Ferrara, and here became connected with the first revival of the

drama.

The classic works of antiquity were now beginning to supersede those religious shows and mysteries, which soon became as offensive to good

taste as they must always have been to rational piety.

At Rome, some of the comedies of Plautus, in their original language, had been acted both publicly on the Quirinal and in the Forum; and also before the Pope and cardinals in the castle of St. Angelo, or in the courts of their own palaces; but, to the unlearned, this must have been an unmeaning show; and it was the Duke of Ferrara who, about the year 1486, first raised the amusement beyond that of a mere spectacle; and, by a translation into Italian verse of the "Menæchmi" of Plautus, made it intelligible to the people generally. This was followed by other translations from Plautus and from Terence. They were represented in the court-yard of the castle of Ferrara (still in existence), and with a splendour of scenery and decoration which even modern ingenuity has rarely exceeded; a galley sufficiently large to contain ten persons having, on one of these occasions, been made to traverse the stage with sails and oars, "in perfect imitation of the reality."

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Whatever may have been done at other courts, I am satisfied, after a very careful investigation, that the merit (however we may estimate it) of having created the modern stage must be given to the Duke of Ferrara. His encouragement of the drama proceeded from a passionate love of the art he cherished. He was himself one of the translators of Plautus; amongst the writers who assisted him, Collenuccio was a fellow-labourer with Boiardo, and one of the Guarini; and, with them, awakened the mind of the youthful Ariosto to the same pursuit.

The translations were followed by original dramas; and of these, the earliest was by the writer with whose biography the subjects of my lecture are connected. It was taken from the history of Joseph; but it was only in its sacred origin that it had any resemblance to the religious mysteries, and I shall call your attention to it for a moment, on account of two passages which we might suppose to have floated upon the memory of our

greatest English poet.

The literature of Italy was never more current with the reading public of this country than in the reign of Elizabeth. They were familiar, either in translations or the original, with works of which it is now difficult to find a single copy; and I do not think that the coincidence of thought to which I have alluded is merely fanciful.

There is a passage that may be translated as follows:

While I am armed with justice and with truth, And bear within a conscience clear and pure, On any human power I look unmoved.

Even here there is something in the sentiment, at least, which slightly reminds us of Shakspeare:

What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted? Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just; And he but naked, tho' locked up in steel, Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

But I will refer you to part of a celebrated passage from the "Merchant of Venice:"

Mercy is above the sceptred sway,

It is an attribute of God himself; And earthly pow'r doth then show likest God's, When mercy seasons justice.

And I will ask you whether this does not bear a very near resemblance to the following:

To punish justly,—
Is but the common and mere act of man;
But pardon is a heav'nly attribute;
In this, his noblest work, be like thy God,
For 'tis alone by mercy we become
An image of the Deity himself.

Comedia di Joseph, Atto VI.

Heaven forbid that I should for a moment regard Shakspeare as a plagiarist! He who "exhausted worlds, and then imagined new," had no need to take his thoughts from others; but a full mind cannot always distinguish memory from conception; and of this we have the most remarkable instances amongst some of the most celebrated of our poets.

Returning to my immediate subject—with the exception of a pastoral

drama by Politian, the Italians have no performance of this description of an earlier date than the play of "Joseph." In its execution it may occasionally seem stiff and ungraceful; but, to the dramatic literature of Italy, it is what the Egina marbles are to sculpture, -with beauties of its own, it forms the connecting link between a rude and a refined style of art.

In reference to the theatre at Ferrara, a question has been raised as to whether the duke was really the author of the translation which has been attributed to him. I am justified in saying that he was. One of his contemporaries tells us, that there was no history, either Greek or Latin, which he had not read and diligently studied; and we need not hesitate to give him credit for a greater degree of scholarship than was necessary to the translation of a Latin comedy. Indeed, it was one of the peculiar features of an age (if I may be allowed to use the words of an eccentric poet)-

When battle, murder, sudden death prevailed-

of an age as remarkable for the constant occurrence of the basest as well as the noblest actions, and for an almost savage ferocity; that it was equally remarkable for the rapid advancement of letters and the arts; and that they numbered amongst their cultivators some of the bravest of its "These iron men of tournament and feud," wrote verses military chiefs. distinguished for their delicacy and feeling.

A short piece by Alessandro Sforza, one of the great captains of his time, who died in 1473, will satisfy you, that I am not speaking at random. It is entitled a "Sonnet written in Affliction," and runs as

follows:

Weary and sad, and feeble from the blow, My weight of earthly care has borne me down, And long-offended Heav'n with angry frown Regards me, 'till I sink beneath my woe. My cheeks are pale, my tears unceasing flow, My heart is pierced, as one who lies o'erthrown A bleeding captive, and I make my moan That time mispent has caused my overthrow. 'Tis not my planet: 'tis not in my fate, My star, my fortune, or my destiny; My own unbridled passions have alone Provoked Heav'n's wrath; and to my wretched state Suits the lone cell where humbled misery, Weeping, its long transgressions may atone.

This may show us, as a modern writer observes, how in those days they were "humanised without being enervated by mental cultivation."

By a somewhat abrupt transition, we pass from poetry and the drama

to the courts of law.

In 1490, and in the time of Lorenzo de' Medici, the exiled scholar was appointed podestà of Florence. To trace this office through its various changes would itself require a volume. The name means, simply, one in authority or power.* In the middle ages, it was first given to the

* The origin of Podestà was the Roman Potestas; a name given to the judicial office of the Proconsuls, as well as to the humbler one of magistrate of a provincial town. An esteemed literary friend reminds me of the passage "An Fidenarum Gabiorumque esse Potestas,"

in the Tenth Satire of Juvenal; made familiar to us by Dr. Johnson's Imitation.

officers of justice placed in the cities of Northern Italy by the emperor, Frederick Barbarossa. Even in Florence, it once implied the absolute sovereignty of the state; but its powers were afterwards confined to the administration of the laws. Of the high importance in which this office was held, we may judge by an enumeration of some of the qualifications required in its possessor. He was to have completed his thirty-sixth year; to be a knight, marquis, or count; to be well affected to the Church, and not dependent upon any king, prince, or baron who was otherwise; and to have filled the same or some other judicial office of equal dignity in some other city of Italy. And it says little for the public virtue of the Italians of the fifteenth century, that in order to prevent this high administrator of the laws from being influenced by the partiality of friendship or the fear or favour of party, it was essential, not merely that he should be chosen from amongst the citizens of other states, but he was also forbidden to receive a gift, under any pretence or denomination whatever, from the people over whom he was placed, or even to visit at their houses.

He was elected by citizens appointed for that purpose, and whose mode of proceeding was defined and prescribed with a like suspicious caution. Confidence does not seem to have been reposed in any one: the surest proof of a low state of public morality. Like "Cælebs in search of a wife," or like "the Irish gentleman in search of a religion," these electors went forth in search of a minister of justice; but they travelled under very stringent conditions. They took oath not to receive the money that would be provided for their expenses, except with the sincere intention of using it in journeys undertaken for the express purpose of making the election confided to them, and they were to return any balance that might be left. They also swore not to make journeys unnecessarily; nor to stay longer in the cities they visited than the objects of their duty required; and they were not to have any subsequent intercourse with the person they elected; and, in addition to this, a betrayal of the trust confided to them was punishable with something like "civil death."

The person upon whom their choice had fallen was received as became the mode of his election. The day before taking possession of his office he entered the city in a public and solemn manner, accompanied by his court and the officers of his train; was welcomed amidst the sound of drums and trumpets, by peals from the bells of the principal churches,

and received with all possible honour.

Previous to assuming his authority, he had to present himself before the governing body in their audience-chamber, where, after taking the prescribed oaths, he received his wand of office, and took possession of a

palace furnished for him at the public expense.

In addition to his more important duties, he had to assist at the installation of the priori or chief magistrates of the republic—a ceremony which it seems to have been their object to make as imposing as possible in the eyes of the people. Early in the morning the bells of the palace towers were rung as for a solemn feast; the shops were closed; and the principal square was filled with the assembled multitude, who stood in eager expectation of the sight.

At the appointed hour the new functionaries, accompanied by their predecessors, descended the steps of the palace, and proceeded to a mag-

nificent loggia, or open building, which on occasions like this was superbly ornamented with the most beautiful tapestry and other choice and costly furniture. Here the magistrates, accompanied by the great officers of justice and their numerous trains, took their respective places. At their feet sat the citizens, their friends, who attended to give security for the faithful discharge of their duties. When each had taken his position, a standard bearing a red-cross on a ground of white was raised, and a crown was placed upon the head of the marble lion, the emblem of the Republic; which (uninjured through centuries, during the violence of public tumult or of foreign invasion) remains upon the spot it then occupied; as a pledge, perhaps, that the days of Italian liberty may still return.

During these proceedings, we are told, that the musicians, in the service of the government, "discoursed sweet harmonies of martial music;" and the podestà had then to deliver an address in praise of the office to which the magistrates had been appointed, corroborated by quotations from the Bible, by the grave opinions of learned doctors, and by applicable points of law. Instead of repeating, however, what had so often been said, the exiled scholar, with a gracefulness of elocution that has been commemorated by Politian, recited a Latin poem; in which he blended the praises of the Medici, with some beautiful descriptions of the city,

and with a variety of learned and poetical allusions to its history.

As I am chiefly indebted to the late Archdeacon Wrangham for the translation of a portion of this poem, I hope that I shall not tax your patience too severely if I read to you a short extract.

After describing the architectural splendour of Florence itself, and the

richness of its suburbs, he proceeds:

Such gorgeous scenes should foreign passer-by
From the tall summit of some crag descry,
He deems them of Assyrian royalty
The chosen seats; or star-paved terraces,
Or Islands floating amid sunny seas;
Or flow'r-gemm'd fields, the city's outer ring
With thickly studded wealth enamelling.

But O! the nobler growths within thee stored Of rank and genius how shall I record? Minds, that still deem, while graver thoughts they share, The people's pleasures claim a statesman's care. Hence of high eloquence thy youth appear; Their wreaths forensic hence thy jurists wear, Of right and wrong the limit skilled to draw, And solve the many riddles of the law.

Others thy sons there are, on daring wings Borne heavenward; or the causes deep of things From man withheld, anxious to drag to light— Themes of sweet Plato these and the keen Stagyrite.

Add countless arts from distant regions brought,
Sights to surprise, or blessings to be sought—
Arts by Apollo or Minerva nurs'd—
And shall I leave my poets unrehears'd?
'Mid deities in such a synod met,
Shall I the muses' lovely train forget?
For on what spot, thro' Latium's wide-spread state,
E'er beam'd benignant star so blest a fate?

Here Cyrrha's greenest laurels meet mine eye,
Here gush the chanted streams of Castaly;
Here Smyrna's, Mantua's bard, in concord bright,
With all Aonia's ancient choirs unite;
Nor could old Rome, or Athen's self, boast more
Than, singly, thou contain'st of classic lore.
Ah! would the Muses grant me each her tongue,

Ah! would the Muses grant me each her tongue Could I, so voiced, a ninefold strain prolong; Loved of the Gods, dear Florence! all too weak Still were that strain thy various worth to speak!

Nor was this the only occasion when his talents in verse were called upon to aid him in his functions as a magistrate. To those who do not allow for the versatility of Italian genius, or, who "look forward" (as some utilitarian or humorist has said) "to the time when poetry shall be banished, by the practical good sense of society,"—he will appear, indeed, to have been poetical overmuch. It was one of the duties of the Priori or heads of the Republic to wait upon him soon after their own election, for the purpose of counselling him (as it is expressed), "in a grave and proper manner," to administer justice well, to listen with charity and kindness to all parties, and to punish the guilty according to the laws; and this time he replied to them in an Italian ode, which still exists amongst the MSS. of the Magliabecchian Library.

It is curious to observe the changes in customs and manners produced by time and local circumstances. What should we think, in our days, if Mr. Justice Talfourd, attended by the high-sheriff and his chivalry, were to stop before the Tolsey, and recite a poem in praise of Gloucester? Or, if the excellent judge of our County Court, when he meets his brother magistrates at the Sessions, were to admonish them in a Pindaric ode on

the proper performance of their duties?

At Florence, when the podestà had concluded his Latin address, the oaths were administered to the new functionaries, and—invoking the holy name of God—he kissed the forehead of the Gonfalonier of Justice, and presented him with the standard. The old magistrates then returned to their homes; and the new, preceded by the band, and accompanied by the high officials, their assistants and trains, and followed by numerous other persons, returned to the palace, and retired (it is said) to repose themselves.

By ceremonies such as these, which brought the people into contact with the government, and seemed to give them a part in the election of their rulers, they were flattered with the appearance of power after its

reality had long passed into other hands.

Our own earliest notions, both of municipal institutions, and of that rational liberty which gives the power of self-government, were derived from the republican cities of Italy which were established after the fall of the Western Empire. "The Italians," as Sismondi briefly expresses it, "succumbed (before their invaders) as a nation. The ancient social body was annihilated; but the principle of life remained in the fragments of the broken colossus. Their cities and towns defended themselves on their own account. Every smaller association of men which had survived the great one, had the courage to exist for itself. Their hearts first told them, and their reason confirmed, that they had still a country; and for

her they set the first example of those public virtues which became the

pattern of Europe."

But as they increased in wealth and importance, the democratic element essential to a Republic was little more than the fragment of a theory; and the real power, however it might be disguised by a name, fell into the hands of the noble and the wealthy. Of this there are examples—as in the Republics of Venice and Florence—which are familiar to us all. Yet whatever, at different times, may have been the actual position of Italy, there is no country whose writers have breathed higher aspirations for liberty, or expressed deeper feelings of regret at its loss. The "Italia, Italia," of Filicaja has, either in the original or a translation, been read by every one, and has been engrafted by Lord Byron upon the fourth canto of his "Childe Harold;" and the writings of such men as Petrarch in the fourteenth century; of Bembo in the sixteenth; and of Leopardi in the nineteenth; show that the same lofty spirit has always existed, unchanged by time and circumstances. Amongst the manuscripts which I had an opportunity of examining in one of the public libraries of Florence-libraries thrown open, with a noble liberality, to the merest stranger as well as to their own citizens, and without any distinction of persons-I found some verses, written in an almost illegible character, but worthy, on account of the feelings they express, even of the great poets I have mentioned.

They seem to have been written when the Florentines were preparing to defend themselves against the invasion of Charles VIII., and, with

your permission, I will read them in a translation:

O ne'er regret the labour and the cost,
Dear fellow-freemen of my native land!
But strive the tyrant's coming to withstand,
And think of those who liberty have lost!
For what is tyranny? they suffer most
Who in its favour most confide; its hand
Is laid on all; its insolent command
Strips us of every blessing we can boast.
And what avails repentance when 'tis done?
Or, when subdued, denial? Life, estate,
Wife, children, all things dearest to the brave
Are yielded. Still our safety may be won;
Let no man weary struggling for his fate,
But rather die, than live—to be a slave!

It would be scarcely fair to doubt whether a people with whom liberty has always been thus a passion, will, if left to themselves, be able ultimately to achieve their freedom; and we may hope that, in the mean time, they will fit themselves for its enjoyment. But it is by knowledge, virtue, and true religion, that this fitness can alone be attained. There are no other foundations upon which a rational and enduring liberty can be established.

The next office, held by the scholar whose steps we are following, was that of "Captain of Justice" at Ferrara. I have always found a difficulty in assimilating the office of podestà with exactness to any of our modern institutions; but the captain of justice seems very nearly to have resembled the stipendiary magistrate of such towns as Liverpool and Manchester. It was liable, however, to abuses, which, in these days,

could not exist in England. How its duties were performed in the instance immediately before us I find no record; but of the perversion of its functions in the hands of an unprincipled man, by whom it had recently been filled, there is a contemporary narrative which certainly does not draw the portrait of such a stipendiary magistrate as we should desire to see amongst ourselves.

This narrative is taken from an old chronicle, written in a mixture of bad Italian and worse Latin. It describes the death of an unjust minister; and, in translating it, I have in some degree endeavoured to preserve its

primitive character:

"On Monday (says the chronicler), being the eighteenth day of the said month of July, after dinner, at the hour of repose, was slain Master Gregorio Zampante, the duke's captain of justice—the first man in authority under our said lord duke; who, on account of the great influence and credit which he possessed with his sovereign, regarded no man -not even the children and brothers of my lord duke himself; who made the subjects of our said lord tremble—whose decrees were most arbitrary -and who continually gained thousands of ducats by the abuse of his power. Who, moreover, was a man the greatest of villains-without pity or compunction whatsoever; always seizing people and putting them to torture, often giving them, even before he asked a question, four, six, ten, or more applications of the rack (such as you heard it described by Padre Gavazzi, on his first visit to Cheltenham), so that it was of necessity that those who fell into his hands never got out of them again with property and life; for if he did not take their lives he took their goods; and he was a man, I verily believe, not only the enemy of God and the duke's subjects, but moreover of the whole world: so that I do not think, but am quite certain, that if the Duke of Ferrara would have dismissed the rascal, his subjects would willingly have given him more than ten thousand ducats, so hateful was he to all men.

"Every year he robbed so as to lay by, for himself and his children, two thousand ducats or more; and was always in such fear of his life, that if he wished even to wait upon the duke, he was accompanied by his archers and captains of police, with his foot and horse and the whole of his train, and very rarely indeed durst he go forth beyond Ferrara.

"This great villain and king of thieves proceeded with every person who came under his power as follows—that is to say: if he laid hold of one who deserved a thousand gibbets, and had nothing in the duke's dominions, or was a foreigner, but had the means at home, he inquired if he was willing to pay, some a thousand ducats, some more and some less, to the duke, for which he should have the duke's pardon by a representing of the case to his highness in favour of the delinquent; and if he found him the money, he made a relation accordingly, and got a pardon from the duke, to whom he told all kind of lies, at the same time putting the bribes into his own purse by baskets-full; so that, as the proverb says—'where a cat eats on two sides of its mouth, he would eat on three.'

"At this man and his cruelty every one trembled; but at last his hour of reckoning arrived. God, who is the lover of justice, to whom above all things cruelty and villany are offensive, so ordered that on the said day, and at the hour of which we have already made mention, one Vezentino formerly a student at the university, one Zovene a Jew, who a few

years and months back had been baptised a Christian, and one Master Jeronimo a student of medicine at Ferrara, who had received grievous injuries from this Master Gregorio Zampante, entered his house; and the two first ascending—that is to say, the Jew to the top of the stairs, and Vezentino into the chamber where he was asleep in bed, there, with a dagger well-sharpened, pierced him completely through the body, so that he fell upon the ground and was dead forthwith, without being able to repent him of his sins or to call for pardon. This being done, they ran to the door where Jeronimo was waiting for them, and all three fled, leaving Zampante dead in the house; then mounting on horseback, having had persons who held their horses in readiness, and crying loudly as they went- 'Come forth, for we have killed Zampante'-they left the city and crossed the Po, still shouting that they had killed Zampante, for which they had both meat and drink given them for nothing, and no one molested them. It is true our lord, Don Alfonso, sent his archers after them, but they had already reached a place of security; and because all the people, hearing that Zampante was dead, ran to his house and would have pillaged it, the said lord Don Alfonso on the part of the duke, to obviate the scandal of such a thing, made proclamation that every one who had no business in hand should depart to his own house, and so the crowd dispersed.

"Moreover, on the evening of the same day, the corpse was buried in a vault of the church of St. Dominic, under the chapel where the friars

sound the bells.

"It was after this wise that the wretched Zampante finished his wicked life, and went to the habitation of the maladetto diavolo; the duke being

then at Carpi; and thus may all such villains perish."

If this must be taken as the likeness of a stipendiary magistrate in the fifteenth century, we must confess that it is not a very agreeable picture. The death of the unjust minister gave rise to various effusions in verse, some of them untranslateable from their coarseness; but as the local squibs of three hundred and fifty years since are not very common, I will venture to lay one of them before you.

It supposes the spirit of the murdered man to be wandering on the banks of the Styx, and it is written in the form of a dialogue between himself and the old boatman Charon, who even refuses to take him as a passenger. The spirit of Zampante calls out "For Acheron! What ho!

The ferry there!" And the dialogue then continues:

C. Who calls me? Z. 'Tis Zampante.

C. Traitor! chief

Of villains! who, at once, wert judge and thief, Swim if thou wilt, I covet no such fare.

Z. And why? what have I done that I should bear Thy anger?

C. Thou hast caus'd me toil and grief,
And sent such numbers in a space so brief,
Ev'n I have wept to see them claim my care.

Z. Captain of justice was my rank.
C. To be

Her enemy thy effort; and she grieves That every pain the guiltiest soul receives Is nothing to the torture fit for thee. And it then proceeds with allusions to his iniquities elsewhere:

What was the treasure sent to Lucca? Tell (She asks) didst gain it wickedly, or well!

Even a trifle like this (intended as it was for circulation amongst the people) may show the literary character of the age. From the mixture of ancient mythology, not only in their lighter productions, but in their serious and sacred poetry, which we find so frequent, their thoughts and feelings seem to have been essentially Pagan—as much so as those of the Romans under Augustus—although their reason and their faith had long adopted a truer religion.

Having led you through the courts of law in the fifteenth century, I

shall now devote a single page to its diplomacy.

One of its peculiarities was, that when an ambassador was sent to some great prince or potentate, he addressed him in a long Latin oration. Our exiled scholar delivered such an oration when sent by the Duke of Ferrara to the Emperor Maximilian, then at Innspruck, on his return from his victories over the Turks in Croatia.

It was said of such addresses—and doubtless with great truth—that "they were generally little listened to and less understood;" but this

was an exception.

Maximilian was himself a scholar, though he had been slow in the development of his faculties, and in his infancy was almost dumb; and the oration delivered to him by Collenuccio was admired and eagerly sought for by the scholars of the age.

But it is to a more amusing anecdote of diplomacy that I would call your attention: and its hero is Cæsar Borgia, the son (I need scarcely say) of that failing link in apostolical succession Pope Alexander VI.

When Charles VIII., whom the intrigues of the Borgias themselves had brought into Italy, was opposed by them when it was too late, and was proceeding as a conqueror towards Naples, being anxious to secure the faith of the doubtful allies whom he was leaving in his rear, he included, amongst the conditions (which he had forced upon the Pope), a stipulation that Cæsar Borgia (who was then still a cardinal) should attend his majesty on his route ostensibly as legate, but in reality as a hostage for the uncertain fidelity of his Holiness. Those who knew the parties—and it was a knowledge not likely to have escaped the shrewd Frenchman who accompanied Charles as his minister—had little expectation that the terms they had agreed to would otherwise have been observed any longer than the army of France was in sight of Rome.

But these precautions were evaded by one of those frauds on the part of Cæsar Borgia which are more like the trickeries in a pantomime or a farce than the counterplots of a diplomatist; and at which we scarcely

know whether to smile or be indignant.

When the French commenced their march, the legate accompanied them, followed (in order to lull suspicion) by a train of nineteen carriages, two of which, on their first night's halt, he directed to be unloaded, and the treasures they contained were ostentatiously displayed. Upon arriving—the next night—at Velletri, after attending the king to his quarters, he retired to the lodgings prepared for himself, but as soon as it was quite dark, having disguised himself in the dress of one of his stable-boys, he left the city, walked to a place about half a mile off, where a servant

was waiting for him with two chosen horses, and returned at full speed to Rome. The carriages, which had been unpacked the previous night, had been privately ordered to fall into the rear and escape; and the remaining seventeen, when seized upon by the soldiery, were found to be laden either with stones and rubbish, or with articles of little value.

We may easily imagine the feelings of the King of France, when, on the following morning, he discovered the vexatious fraud that had been

practised upon him.

There is a sense, on such occasions, not merely of injury done to our interests, but of insult offered to our self-consequence and pride. An envoy was immediately sent to the Pope, to remonstrate; but the legate denied any premeditated design; the Pope disclaimed all knowledge of his flight; the people of Rome deprecated the anger of the king for an offence of which they were entirely guiltless; and Charles, unwilling to delay his march towards Naples, deferred his vengeance for the insult that had been offered to him. In the mean time he contented himself with ridiculing his enemies at Rome in a farce which was acted in one of the conquered fortresses; and in which, amongst its principal characters and incidents, we may be certain that the cardinal legate and his flight from Velletri were not forgotten.

I now come to our concluding incident; and to the death of the gifted scholar whose biography has formed a connecting link for the subjects

with which we have been occupied.

There cannot be a stronger proof of the sufferings produced by the wrongs and injustice of tyranny, than the fact that, when Cæsar Borgia—transformed from a cardinal to a military chief—was levying war in Romagna, even he (stigmatised as he has been by historians as a monster of cruelty and iniquity) was welcomed, in some places, as a deliverer.

It was thus at Pesaro; and, upon petitioning its conqueror, our exile was permitted to return to his home. But the dynasty of the Borgias was of short duration. A well-known incident—when the poisoned chalice intended for others was, by some mistake, commended to their own lips—deprived the Pope of his life, and his family of its power. Giovanni Sforza then came back to Pesaro, and his destined victim fled for

safety.

Urged, however, by the desire, so common in an exile, of returning to his country—one of the most beautiful on the shores of the Adriatic; or anxious to superintend some proceedings before the courts of law, in which he was interested, he tried to propitiate the tyrant he had served; and, through the mediation of the courts of Mantua and Urbino, to whom his safety was solemnly promised, he was permitted to return to his home. On his going to the palace, the prince embraced him, and received him so as to give every appearance of sincerity to the expressions of regard which he had used in writing to him. But six days having passed with this false show of clemency, he impatiently threw aside the mask he had assumed; pretended to have discovered the letter addressed by the exile to Cæsar Borgia, and declared it to be an act of treason.

He forgot the pledges which he had given to the courts of Mantua and Urbino, and was regardless of the promises which had induced the unhappy fugitive again to place himself within his power. He forgot, too, that the wise and good have a voice with posterity. The records of

their lives are more enduring than the biography of petty princes; and a wrong which might be forgotten, if committed against the worthless or obscure, brings down an eternity of infamy when inflicted upon one of the few whose memories are destined to survive.

Indifferent to every honourable consideration, and urged on by the misrepresentations of his courtiers, and without formal accusation or legal process, he now decreed the death of his long-destined victim. If circumstances could have aggravated a calamity so overwhelming in itself, they were those under which Collenuccio first received the intimation of the

fate that awaited him.

It was early on the morning of the 6th of July, in the year 1504, that, surrounded by his family, he seemed recompensing himself in their affections for the privations he had suffered. He was cheerfully arranging his manuscripts and books—those mute companions of his studies, from which he had so long been separated—and was speaking to those around him of the new bounty of his prince, and the end of his afflictions. was at his side; his children, so long dispersed and wandering, at last saw themselves re-united; when the officer of justice abruptly entered, read to him the order of the tyrant, led him to prison, and there informed him that in five days he must die. He bore this reverse with the fortitude of a noble mind, and the resignation of one who had been accustomed to sorrow. Not a sigh or tear escaped him; but, turning to the officer, he said, almost with a smile, that "it was not by the death he might suffer, but by evil and unworthy actions alone that a man could be rendered infamous;" that it would cast a glory upon his name, when it was known to posterity that he had met his fate by confiding in the plighted word and pretended friendship of the prince who had betrayed him, and had been doomed to death by the very hand in which he himself had placed a sceptre. He rejoiced, too, that he had not been condemned by the mockery of a legal process, as the tyrant had thus acknowledged him guiltless, and by avoiding the forms, and being careless even of the semblance of justice, had at once cast aside the obligations both of decency and honour. "I am already old," he said, "and willingly give up that portion of existence most difficult to be supported, and a country made miserable by the extinction of its liberties and laws; and I am grateful, therefore, to Heaven that, under these circumstances, it rather gives me death than life."

Having expressed himself to this effect, he turned with apparent cheerfulness to one of the attendants, and requested to have materials for writing; not, like the abject and the guilty, meanly to beg for mercy, but to leave us a remarkable instance of the constancy and firmness of an

unconquered mind.

It was at this moment, after a separation so cruel, and with the certainty of his fate before him, that he composed the finest of his poems, his "Ode to Death." "We may suppose," says his Italian biographer, "that many have met their fate with a serenity of countenance which only concealed the bitter struggle within; but we can never doubt that the mind of Collenuccio was intrepid and composed, when we look at the order, the elegance, and the beauty of this extraordinary poem, and consider that it was written in his sixtieth year, and almost under the hands of the executioner."

I feel that it would be trespassing too much upon your patience to re-

peat it entire; but I should not be doing justice to my subject, if I did

not lay a portion of it before you.

Like most of the productions of the age in which it was written, there was a strange blending of Christian feeling, Platonism, and Pagan allusions; yet they were discords ably harmonised. After contemplating the aspects under which death may be regarded as a good, or welcomed as a relief, he continues as follows:

The soul to this dark frame Descends from heaven divine and pure, And takes the vestments which obscure Its bright and glorious flame. 'Tis doomed to wander here, 'Midst terror and desire, Grief and vain gladness, wrongs, and ire, Outrage, and strife, and fear. Where nature's elements themselves still wage Fierce warfare, and eternal tempests rage. Oh! when oppressed, and hurled, Beneath the weight of this ungrateful world, Twere beautiful to turn from such a state, And gaze upon the skies! Then grant, in mercy, his first liberty, To one who long has panted to be free, And seeks by thy prevailing hand to rise Above his cruel fate, Looking for his relief, O noble Death! to thee.

Falsely has life been counted happiness:
If by a tyrant, giv'n but to oppress,
'Tis a deep grief, a lengthen'd sigh,
Warfare, and fear, and agony.
Nature, man's rigid stepmother, bestows
In thee the only good midst countless woes:

Unto the wisest 'tis delight

To mark the end of human pain,
And say, "O thou who free'st me for my flight,
Haste, nor thy merciful intent restrain!"
The gift of Heav'n, and her whose pow'r benign,
Can cleanse the breast from every earthly stain,

Veiled in immortal gloom, 'tis thine, Our deeds of guilt and shame to hide Beneath oblivion's endless tide; Therefore shalt thou my trusted escort be, And willingly I come, O Death! to thee.

How many lofty minds in ancient days,

The learned Arab, and the Hebrew seer,
Roman and Persian, Greek and Goth, appear,
In divers tongues, accordant in thy praise!
One envies him who in his cradle dies:
Others desire to meet thee when life's feast,
For full enjoyment spread, before them lies;
And some have wish'd it when expected least:
Some think 'twere better far we ne'er should see
The light that but reveals our misery;
Many, impatient of this weary load,

Have hurried rashly to thy calm abode;
And these thou wilt distinguish in thine hour,
The coward from the brave,
The free true spirit from the slave,
The rugged bramble from the drooping flow'r.
Grant then, for here thy coming I await,
That when I fall, the victim of his hate,
The tyrant's rage quenched in that blood may be,
Which thus, O Death! I consecrate to thee.

Then, by a transition to the faith and hopes of a Christian, he concludes with an expression of confidence in his Redeemer:

" Him" (as he very finely observes)

Who in mercy yielding up his breath, Dying for us, made beautiful ev'n Death!

Having thus poured forth his feelings, in a manner (says my Italian authority) not unworthy of Socrates, he calmly turned his thoughts to the affairs of his family; and as the orders of his tyrant had even deprived him of the privilege of extending a will, according to the usual forms of law, he wrote a paper, a few hours before his death, expressive of his last wishes as to the disposal of his effects, and the future welfare of his children; hoping, as he declares in the document itself, that it would fall into the hands of some one who, induced by the common feelings of humanity, would faithfully convey it to its destination.

In this instrument, after speaking with deep affection of his wife, he enters into details as to his family, his friends, his books, manuscripts, and collections, with a calmness and self-possession which invest it with the deepest interest. When he had completed it, he resigned himself to the executioner, and was strangled in his prison, preserving to the last a firmness worthy of the greatest examples, which have ever been recorded.

That such a man should have been the victim of a petty tyrant, is one of those stains by which the page of history is but too often disfigured; and it becomes the duty of posterity to render that justice to his memory which was denied to himself while living.

The hour devoted to this evening's lecture has been occupied—as you will have observed—with recollections of a period upwards of three hundred and fifty years before the age in which we live; and there is matter both of gratulation and regret in the reflection that while England has been advancing to her present state of freedom and improvement, Italy should still be little better in either respect than she was at the end of the fifteenth century. Premature efforts have thrown her back. Her triumphs have been crushed by foreign intervention. But this cannot continue. And in the words of the great historian whom I have already quoted—for, on such a subject, how can I better conclude than in the language of Sismondi?—" Europe will know no repose till the nation which, in the dark ages, lighted the torch of civilisation with that of liberty, shall be enabled herself to enjoy the light which she created."

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

VIII.

Whatever distress, public or private, weighed upon the hearts of men in those days, there was one short pause in the year when discontent of every kind was forgotten; the beggar flung away his rags, the rich laid aside their purple, and all alike, assuming the garb of folly for the nonce, cast their cares behind them, and laughed, and shouted, and careered about the streets in the excitement of unbounded merriment. The palaces of the great, and the dull haunts of toil, the solemn precincts of holy structures, and the modest home of humble virtue, were equally invaded by the motley throng that swarmed the thoroughfares day and night; for not only the dykes of cold ceremonial, but even those of propriety were thrown down; the flood of popular humour broke loose upon the capital, and buffoonery spoke freely behind the protecting mask.

This short respite from thought, this transient fit of gleeful madness, was the carnival. Not the pale carnival of our days, with its meagre show of stereotype masks, followed by a mob of ragged urchins—not this remnant of a once flourishing festival—must be present to the mind when endeavouring to recal it in its pristine freshness; and though the stern moralist may condemn these annual saturnalia, they were doubtless deemed in those iron times a safety-valve to the constrained passions of the multitude, more or less necessary in exact ratio to the restraint imposed. In good policy all fetters should be entwined with roses; and pity it is that in breaking the fetters, the roses are, for the most part,

scattered to the wind.

The streets were joyous with music and merriment. The shrilly sounds of pipe and tabor, the twanging of lutes, the laughter of the people, and gladdening notes of childish glee, and the imitative cries of everything that animates nature, mingled in deafening confusion. The mysteries, or rude, often gross farces that preceded the drama, were exhibited on the open places; whilst wandering minstrels, story-tellers, or ballad-singers, conjurers, pilgrims, and charlatans of every kind, vied with each other in their endeavours to engross the attention of the passers by. Pageant followed pageant—all the animal world having been called upon to contribute its furs, feathers, or scales, to the disguises hit upon by the ingenuity of the mummers—headed by clarions; the running crowd mingling with the maskers, now jeering at, now, in turn, jeered at by them, as they came along on their ambling mules or barbed coursers, in separate groups, or followed each other in lengthened processions.

But in the midst of this general festivity, one narrow, domestic circle remained cold and joyless—it was that of Nicholas Flamel the scrivener. It being a holiday, the pen was laid aside, the spinning-wheels were put away,

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impression of gloom.

everything about the house had been duly dusted and set to rights, the scanty articles of furniture consigned to their proper places; and somehow or another these little preparations made the dark, naked apartment look even more denuded than usual, and besmoked as were both walls and rafters in those days, when chimneys were not yet brought to much perfection, it looked not unlike a place recently visited by a fire. Nor did the faces within it bear an aspect so cheerful as greatly to diminish the

Nicholas sat absorbed in reverie at the heavy table in the corner, whilst his mother and cousin, with hands folded in their laps, appeared to be engaged much after the same fashion in their customary places within the chimney nook. Occasionally a deep sigh or yawn escaped one which was immediately responded to by the others; except, however, those unconscious tokens of sympathy, they seemed well nigh forgetful of each other's presence. It is, indeed, probable that the subject of their meditations, if disclosed, would have met with little or no reciprocity. The only attempt of this sort made in the course of an hour proved sufficiently how discrepant was the tenor of their thoughts.

"Tis strange," said Margot, timidly venturing to break the long silence—"'tis strange that no mummers have yet found their way here

-I hope some will come before the day is over."

Dame Flamel sharply observed, she hoped no such thing; seeing that they had not an overstock of hydromel, or of anything worth offering in the house; being so well aware of this, as Margot must be, she wondered to hear her indulge in such foolish wishes. And Nicholas expressed the hope that Heaven would be pleased to spare them the annoyance. After this little diversity of sentiment another long pause ensued, during which it soon became evident that Dame Flamel's cogitations had gradually given way to a blessed state of oblivion. Respect for this solace, in which the old woman was in the habit of indulging, sufficed to keep the other two silent. Sometimes, indeed, when the sound of rushing feet and of glad voices passing by caught Margot's ear, she would half rise, as if impelled to join the throng; but recollecting herself, with a sad glance around, she as often sank back on her seat.

As Nicholas noted this struggle between her gay young spirit and the circumstances that checked and depressed it, a deeper shade passed over

his features.

"After all," mused he, "she would not have been happy with me—but, poor girl, will this dull home be tenable for her when another mistress shall have entered it? and yet, where else shall she find refuge?"

And his heart grew sad with misgivings which he ever sought to shut out from his thoughts, but which, despite all his efforts, tenaciously kept

their hold upon them.

Again Margot raised her pretty head; her colour went and came with doubt and pleasure, and at last settled in the rosy tints of the latter feeling as the door was unceremoniously flung open, and a group of merry maskers burst into the room. It was at first difficult to recognise any of the party; but the familiar accents that greeted Margot from behind a bill of preternatural length, betrayed to her quick ear Odette Blanchard, the changer's eldest daughter, who, fantastically bedecked

with plumage, sought to personify that much calumniated member of the feathered tribe, yelept a goose. Margot immediately detected, also, under the sober costume of a female pilgrim, the well-known form of Pernelle, as she advanced to greet Dame Flamel; but she had more trouble in conjecturing who the person might be that had selected Nicholas for the butt of her pleasantries. Odette, however, did not allow her much leisure for observation.

"Do you know who I am-can you guess?" said this very imperfect specimen of the volatile tribe, attempting to hiss through the hollow painted tube intended to imitate a bill. "Do you know who I am,

beautiful Margot?"

"I am afraid a very silly goose, indeed: one that does not so much as know how to speak its mother tongue," replied Margot, laughing. "But,

Odette, I did not think to have seen you thus bedizened."

"We make part of a procession on a mask promenade through the town, and I proposed detaching ourselves from the rest, with an escort of clerks and cousins, to come and see you. Do you not think me a rare goose for my pains?"

"Undoubtedly. But what is - who is teazing my poor cousin,

Nicholas?"

"Have you not the ingenuity to discover?"

"I see nothing but a huge mound, made of pasteboard, I presume, painted iron-grey, and cannot conceive what it may be meant to represent."

" Then listen."

A hand-bell was now heard to tingle, and a fresh young voice, defying the efforts of the speaker to make it sharp and shrill, called out at intervals:

"I ring for a wedding—a wedding—is nobody coming to marry? Are there no wooers here? Then must I further-I must to those who will wed," and the bell resumed its part in the colloquy: "Nicholas Flamel-Nicholas Flamel, the writer-it is he I'm calling. Will he not come to woo and to wed? I ring merrily for lovers, and de profundis to all bachelors."

"I will neither woo, nor wed, if I am to endure such unceasing noise on the occasion;" said Nicholas, laughing. "But you may waddle further, most merry Bell, for there are no brides or bridegrooms here."

"That's false!" retorted the Bell, spiritedly. "Odette Blanchard is going to marry good Joseph Dufresne, my father's head clerk—so

there's need of gay peals," and again the Bell tingled.
"If I could tell who a Bell's father might be I should now know you fair mask," replied Flamel, good-humouredly; "but not being able to imagine, unless it be the caster, I would only pray you not to leave your discretion too far behind."

"When did you ever hear of a Bell's having discretion," retorted the laughing little-hooded head, peeping through an aperture at the top of the pasteboard, "and yet tell me a secret and see if I can't keep it."

"I won't trust you, fair Bell, lest you mount the next steeple and proclaim it to the whole town. But is Odette truly about to be married?"

"Truly-truly-most truly; and so is little Colombe, the gentlest, prettiest, best little girl between the town and the city."

"Say the naughtiest, noisiest, and most mischievous," said Nicholas, raising his forefinger. "And pray on whom is this choice piece of goods to be bestowed?"

Tingle, tingle, tingle, went the hand-bell.

"Listen, good people all—I am ringing for a union, the blithe, the brilliant marriage of Colombe Blanchard with Nicholas Flamel, the scrivener."

A burst of merriment, in which even the grave student did not disdain to join, followed this sally, ventured by one in that happy age when womanhood is coming fast enough to lend interest to the sportiveness of lingering childhood.

"A pretty bargain he would have there," said Nicholas. "No-no;

that peal must be rung anew."

"And which way, please," said Colombe, archly-"which way?-

backwards, perhaps?"

As Nicholas was at a loss how to parry this home-thrust, his mother gently drew him aside; and whilst Margot was in her turn the object of Colombe's jests, whispered in his ear:

"Although a mere child, she never dare go so far if things were not ripe in that quarter—strike the iron while it is hot, my son, and bring

the daughter of my choice into my arms."

" Are you sure, dear mother, you really wish it, and so soon?" said

the young man, with some show of hesitation or reluctance.

"Sure that I wish it! Holy Virgin! sure that I wish it! I, who only live in the hope of seeing that union accomplished! Were Pernelle as poor as she is rich, I would still say, marry her—marry her—marry her."

"Well, the die has long been cast," murmured Nicholas; and profiting of the moment when his mother was offering the customary refreshments to her guests, he joined Pernelle, who stood at the open door, gazing at the crowd hurrying by, and remained for some time mute and blushing by her side, far more embarrassed than the fair girl herself.

"Colombe has frightened you from the room, as she has me," she said at length, breaking a pause that lasted long enough to become op-

pressive.

"Yes," said Nicholas, availing himself rather awkwardly of the open-

ing thus afforded—" marriage is a solemn thing!"

Pernelle's peculiar turn of mind did not admit of her finding the remark preposterous in that scene and place; she merely bowed acquiescence in this grave sentiment.

"Do you not think," resumed Flamel, following the course of his own reflections, "that the will of Heaven should determine our choice, rather than the mere caprices and chimeras of fancy?"

"Undoubtedly," replied the sententious Pernelle.

"And that," continued the meditative suitor, "if revealed to us, not only in the prudential considerations of parents, but even made manifest by more especial tokens, we should blindly, submissively, in hope and in trust, obey the heavenly mandate?"

"I should think a union thus based could not failed to be blessed," said Pernelle; "but how few in this world receive such direct heavenly

manifestations."

'True," replied Nicholas, and another awkward pause ensued. He had long been resolved on the step he was about to take, and could Pernelle at once, by the mere power of volition, have become his wife, he had felt happy, quietly, calmly happy. Indeed, the exuberance of feeling which is alone thought worthy of being termed happiness in early youth, it was not in his nature to feel, or, if felt at all, had to him been rather a source of pain than of pleasure. But the explanations, the ceremonies, the efforts that were to precede and attend this much-desired climax, were points of sore difficulty, disheartening and wearying. How were these to be got over? A regular love-scene was quite beyond him, and, somehow or another, Pernelle, according to his own view, was as little fitted to play a part in one as himself. When, therefore tired, as it seemed, of throwing away opportunities upon her backward suitor, Pernelle was about to leave him to the undisturbed enjoyment of his reverie, he suddenly seized her hand, and gently detaining her, said,

"Such a warning have I received with regard to you, Pernelle—you are the companion Heaven has allotted me through life. Will you,

knowing this, reject me?"

The little hand was not withdrawn, and Pernelle, whose hood had been thrown back from the first, became suffused with blushes, as she replied, in low but clear accents:

"I have long foreseen—why should I disown it—wished for this hour; the more so that my father, I know, approves of you for a son—I shall

gladly be a daughter to your mother."

The great difficulty was now over; and yet Nicholas's heart throbbed as if a refusal had ever in reality troubled his spirits; but until that instant liberty had been his. Thoughts could not bind, but words did; and he had irrecoverably pledged himself. Not that the slightest shade of regret mingled with his feelings—it was the importance, the responsibility of the step he had taken that weighed upon him. His youth, his solitary existence, and the sensitiveness it had engendered, contributed to make him painfully alive to the solemnity of an engagement formed in a scene so discrepant from the emotions of the hour. He felt the necessity of adding a few words; but they partook not of the highly-coloured romances on which his pen had been so often engaged, but rather of those considerations which usually pressed upon his mind.

"You must be aware, I think, that we are very poor—that my most strenuous exertions barely suffice to the necessities of a very humble style of living, to a provision for my mother and cousin—that the latter will, in all probability, ever be entitled to a share of what I possess, being wholly destitute of means herself. I would not withhold these

facts from you or your father."

"I have enough for the comfort of all," said Pernelle, with a gentle smile. "My mother is no more—yours, I hope, will henceforth fill her place, and Margot shall be to me as a favourite sister."

Nicholas was touched with these sentiments, and the tone in which

they were uttered.

"You will, indeed, be a gift from Heaven to us!" he exclaimed—
"good and gentle that you are; nor need you fear the possibility of my
showing myself otherwise than worthy of the boon. I will be true to
you unto death."

Pernelle raised her mild blue eyes to his, with a glance fraught with woman's trust; his own responded with warmer meaning than they had yet assumed towards any of Eve's daughters, and they re-entered the room hand in hand, with the primitive simplicity that formed the groundwork of their characters.

Here, all was joyousness and mirth. The incessant chattering of the Bell had so engaged every one that the absence of Pernelle and Nicholas had not been observed, except indeed by Margot, who, in spite of the efforts of her companions to gain her whole attention, had marked their every movement. And when the couple returned, and Colombe unreproved, ringing a sharp peal, proclaimed their union in gleeful tones, Margot's cheek grew pale, and she felt a sinking of the heart.

It was a relief to see the whole party move off; and the cold refusal with which she met Odette's friendly proposal to join them, supported though it was by her aunt and cousin, came spontaneously from the heart, and cost her no regret. She noted every little sign, even the warmer and longer embrace than usual in which Dame Flamel and Pernelle indulged; and when at last the door closed behind the latter, her impatience overcoming all other considerations, she fairly exclaimed:

"Praised be the Virgin, they are gone at last!"

Before, however, Dame Flamel had time to reprove, or Nicholas to express his concern at this remark, more mummers entered the apartment; and this time all Margot's sagacity was at fault, nay, she soon became convinced she had never seen them before, and her curiosity was

proportionably excited.

An itinerant wine-vender, with his tap-boy and a glee-maiden, with the badges and costume of their trade, rolling a barrel between them, was a sight so common at all fairs, public festivals, and even at sundry promenades, that these intruders might have been thought to be merely following their calling at a time certainly the most propitious for it, but for the false wigs, paint, and patches, with which they had endeavoured to disguise their features.

"It is a poor heart that does not cheer up on so blithe a day," said the leader of the party, addressing the scrivener; "and a cup of wine warmeth the heart—mine is sweet and cheap, you'll like it, an you

taste it."

"We want not thy wine, friend, any more than thy company," said Dame Flamel, peevishly.

"Yet wine restoreth vigour to the old, dispelleth the chill of age,

maketh the spirit glow and the limbs light."

"One would not be tempted to think so by thine own appearance," Dame Flamel sharply retorted; for the man, despite the assistance of his tow wig, and paint laid thick on every wrinkle, could not conceal advanced age, which was sufficiently betrayed by the feebleness of his steps

and the bend of his figure.

"You would not turn away poor folks on a day like this," said the female, who, though her face was strangely disfigured by the various means she had employed to make it difficult of recognition, exhibited enough of grace in the well-turned ankle, which a short petticoat displayed to advantage, and enough of the gipsy in her raven elf-locks, to awaken the ingrained prejudices of Dame Flamel, who hated and feared

the lures to the male sex, with all the vivid recollections of a suspicious wife and the watchfulness of an over-careful mother. Although such feminine and matronly feelings had but a general surface—no offence having ever been given by the erring tribe in her own family—still she regarded the young intruder with anything but amicable feelings, as, swinging round a small lyre, she struck with a skilful hand a few preliminary chords, and began, in a deep melodious voice, a favourite drinking song of that day:

Gregoire est mort, Il a grand tort, Dans son caveau, Sur son tonneau. Il a pris fin, Avant son vin.

Il n'a pas, lan-la, de-ri-ret-te, Il n'a pas tout bu; Il n'a pas, lan-la, de-ri-ret-te, Il n'a pas tout bu, Il n'a pas tout bu

The glee-maiden had barely proceeded thus far, when Dame Flamel

indignantly interrupted her.

"Canst thou not better employ the skill that nature has given thee, than in singing such impudent songs? Go, foolish maiden, thou hast brought thy wares to the wrong market—yet stay," she hastily added, seeing her about to move off in Nicholas's direction, "it may be thou knowest something more worth our listening to, though, God wot, if thou thinkest of gaining pennies here thou wert never more mistaken in

thy life."

"If I may not sing for lucre then I'll sing for love," said the girl, casting another arch glance towards the spot where Nicholas and the old vintner stood apart, indulging in what seemed a very earnest colloquy, though carried on in so subdued a tone, that nothing short of the most breathless silence could have enabled the others to overhear any part of it. This, however, the glee-maiden took care should not be; and changing her measure to one equally light, but more soft, she began a new strain:

—llons, allons, gay, gaiement, ma mignonne, Allons, allons, gay, gaiement, vous et moi, ma mignonne, Mon père a faict faire ung chateau, D'or et d'argent sont les creneaux, Allons, gay, gaiement, ma mignonne.

Allons, gay, gaiement, ma mignonne, Vous et moi. D'or et d'argent sont les carreaux. Le roi n'en a pas de si beaux. Allons, allons, gay, gaiement, ma mignonne, Allons, gay, gaiement, vous et moi, ma mignonne.

Margot listened, entranced, for she had the intuitive feeling for music which characterises passionate natures; even Dame Flamel was mollified, and condescended to say:

"Well, that is not so bad—I see nothing against good manners in that; it is a pity, though, that such a mere child as thou seemest,

should not have found a better employment for the gifts which Heaven has bestowed on thee."

Whilst Dame Flamel was preaching better ways to the girl, and Margot was entreating her to continue her song, Nicholas pursued his dialogue with the stranger.

"Let me understand clearly," said he, "what would be required at my

hands, in order to gain so large a sum."

"Nothing but to aid some bungling students in a few chemical attempts-you have some knowledge of the science-you will run no

risk, and earn plenty of money."

"Money is certainly an object with me, more so now than it ever has been," said Nicholas, thoughtfully, casting a glance round the mean home into which he was shortly to bring a rich bride, and the thoughts of the many embellishments his pride suggested rose to his mind; "but where there is mystery there must be something wrong. Besides, how can I trust utter strangers."

"You shall have good and sufficient reference; consult the changer, Blanchard. He will satisfy your scruples as to the parties and their Will that do?" purpose, though of course he will commit no one.

"Yes," said Nicholas, without hesitation; "and if you have not deceived me in that particular I will trust you for the rest, though, unmerited as it is, I feel a dim consciousness of evil lurking about my obscure abode."

"If so, it comes not from me," replied the stranger.

At that moment the glee-maiden paused suddenly in her song, which she had resumed, and the vintner abruptly broke off his colloquy, as a

fresh and boisterous party dashed into the room.

They were arrayed in lions, tigers, and panthers' skins, more or less artfully adjusted, so as effectually to conceal the features, and, in great measure, the forms of the wearers; but not adapted, as in ordinary cases, to play with any nicety the part of the animal selected, nor did they condescend to roar otherwise than au naturel. Whilst some surrounded the glee-maiden, and some whispered to the vintner, and others unceremoniously attacked the tap-boy and barrel, one of the shaggy kings of the forest addressed Margot in a voice which, though heard but once, had never been forgotten, and caused the blood to leave her cheek as quickly as it had mantled it.

"This, then, is the pretty wench you spoke of," said one of the spotted breed, drawing near, after refreshing himself plentifully from the vintner's cask; "by my troth you might have said more of her, and spoken within bounds—her eyes are carbuncles, and her lips rosebuds!

as a fox to discover, and now come as a lion to devour her."

Could the power ascribed to carbuncles in those times have been infused into Margot's eyes, that instant would have seen the rude jester literally reduced to cinders at her feet; but as it was, he was safe from the indignation which gave additional splendour to her lustrous orbs.

"What sayst thou, pretty one," said he in the lion's hide; "wilt thou be my favourite from this day forth? I swear none shall dare to insult

"He means the queen of the desert," said another of the mummers— "all dry, scorched sand; nothing green or fresh ever springs up there."

"None," continued the royal suitor, "shall be better cared for. All my spoils shall be laid at thy feet, for thou art the fairest star that ever lit up night—the most beautiful flower that ever was enwreathed in mortal's crown of earthly felicity."

"By my life he is as good as a clerk, and has it all at his tongue's

end!" exclaimed he in the leopard's skin.

Margot stood rooted to the spot with surprise. Unused, despite the lowliness of her fortune, to rude and unprincipled gallantries, from the attacks of which her extreme seclusion and Dame Flamel's vigilance had hitherto successfully screened her, her spirit rose against the insult, and would have burst every restraint, had not that well-remembered voice recalled the mysterious visit of the Templar, and the wrath he had on that occasion denounced against her family, should they even in the most indirect manner contravene his views. She trembled at the bare supposition that these were the companions of whose ruthlessness he had then spoken; and as she gazed on their numbers, resentment was silenced by fear.

Covered with blushes that burned her very brow, and veiling with her long lashes the tears of wounded pride and modesty fast gathering in her eyes, Margot stood a butt for the rough wit of her tormentors; when the glee-maiden, gliding noiselessly to her side, raised herself on tip-toe to

reach her ear, and softly whispered:

"Beware of the creatures of the desert, for they can assume many shapes—now they are frisking panthers; but anon they are like the serpent fascinating their prey to its destruction—beware!"

Margot looked round for her friendly adviser, but only caught sight of her short, blue petticoat, trimmed with broad teeth of crimson cloth, as it

brushed through the door.

The vintner's party gone, and no one but Nicholas and Dame Flamel to stand between Margot and her persecutors, her courage rose with the emergency. She was about to venture an appeal to their better feelings,

when another and still more noisy set burst upon the scene.

This group was, according to the taste of the time, more happily travestied than any of the foregoing. It consisted of a stag, with formidable antlers towering fantastically over his head, and several hounds of the larger sort, from whose awkward leaps his own somewhat doubtful agility could scarcely have saved him had he entertained the slightest notion of flight, of which, however, he betrayed no symptom, as he majestically presented himself closely followed by his four-footed antagonists. In the rear were a few gay foresters, with hunting horns slung across their green jerkins, and broad knives stuck in their belts, in the chief of whom Margot, to her great joy, recognised a cousin, long lost sight of but well re-She knew him to be bold and daring, and likely to be surmembered. rounded by friends of the same description; but she was unprepared for the singular performance which, perhaps better than any hostile proceedings, changed, for the time being, the rampant humour of those wilder inhabitants of the woods who crowded around her.

The sylvan procession clustering together at the further extremity of the room, a silence ensued which was presently broken by sounds as of the twittering of birds, the rustling of leaves, the amorous bleating of the stag calling his roe to the clear streamlet, whose bubbling was distinctly heard, transporting the imagination to some tranquil forest glade. Then came, as if borne upon the wind, indications of a distant hunt, the winding of horns, the neighing of steeds, and baying of hounds. The clatter of the chase, growing louder, as if drawing nearer—the view holloa—the onward course of the startled stag—the yelping of the dogs finally gored by his antlers—the gay morte, all was so singularly true as to deceive the most critical and practised ear.

The lions and tigers had remained silent but deeply-interested listeners,

lost at first in wonder, which gradually yielded to enjoyment.

"This beats aught I ever saw in the East," said a leopard in the ear of a panther. "By Bafomet, the jugglers there whom we used to think so much of are mere dolts compared with these."

"'Tis little short of devilry," said Margot's chief persecutor; "but there's deeper witchery still in you dark eyes. Beshrew me, but he of the

green jerkin makes up to her with success!"

Roger was, indeed, saluting Margot with the familiarity which their relationship justified, and which she showed no disposition to reprove.

"Do, Roger, deliver us of these fierce animals," she eagerly whispered, just as Almeric d'Aulnoy turned to address her once more in the language of unbridled admiration.

"What! have we prowlers in the cover?" exclaimed Roger, in a gay tone. "To your horns, my gallant stag—to your teeth, my brave hounds

-to your good blades, my brave foresters."

At these words, the dogs rose on their hind legs, and showed a propensity to imitate the bear in the use of the fore-paws, the huntsmen coolly laid their hands on the hilt of their knives, and stood sternly eyeing their opponents, whilst the stag, lowering its formidable antlers, made a rush at the chief offender. Quick as thought, the incensed lion sprang forward and seized him between the horns, when one of the Asiatic tribe, shaking off with some difficulty the inconvenient hug of the foremost hound, rushed to his side, exclaiming angrily,

"Art mad, Almeric, to engage in a brawl of this sort, where victory or defeat were alike fatal? Messires, sauve qui peut," and adding example to precept, the speaker dashed with incredible impulse amongst the pack, followed by his companions in so furious an onset, that ere the prostrate dogs could recover their legs, their fierce antagonists were beyond

pursuit.

Whilst Dame Flamel, with better grace than usual, pressed these timely visitors to take some refreshment, Margot and her kinsman ex-

changed greetings.

This youth was her nearest surviving relative, and the friendship of their early days had been kept alive by occasional meetings, when chance brought him to town; but, although these visits were not of frequent occurrence, they had sufficed to make him an object of peculiar aversion to the rest of the family. In truth, he had been but a wild slip from youth upwards—had disdained his father's plodding avocation, disappointed his hopes of ever seeing him a scholar, and wandered about the country with all sort of vagabonds, wood cutters, coal-burners, gipsies, and some even affirmed that he was not unknown among the

pastoureaux, or brothers of the rustrerie, who then desolated the fertile counties of France. Be that as it may, Dame Flamel was in the habit of blessing the circumstances that had hitherto kept this doubtful character at a convenient distance from her quiet home; and now heard with no small alarm that he had obtained an appointment as aid to one of the king's foresters close to Paris. Although this was but a poor situation, he trusted to his own abilities to turn it to account one day, and had, he said, married on the strength of this hope, promising to introduce his wife to Margot on the morrow, and to take her along with them, that she might see something of the fun going on in the city instead of moping all day at home. Although the aunt did not much approve of the proposal, still, as there appeared no rational ground on which to raise an objection, she did not withhold her consent, and with another cousinly salute Roger took his departure.

Heedless of the riotous merriment that enlivened the streets, as much by night as by day, the family retired to rest at their accustomed hour; but the diverse emotions Margot had experienced during the last few hours hindered the approach of sleep. No one but herself had recognised the Templars under their disguises, nor did she reveal her discovery; and now in the solitude of her chamber the figure of Almeric d'Aulnoy stood out from among the many groups that peopled the canvass of her thoughts, in strong but not unpleasant relief. For, however offensive the form in which his bold flattery was conveyed, and the terror with which he had inspired her, it was flattery still; and admiration, under almost any shape, is so agreeable to the susceptibility and vanity of youth, that it often blinds the inexperienced to those pitfalls

over which it lies a bright but treacherous footway.

Margot then reverted to her own prospects under the change about to take place in the family. Nicholas's final engagement, expected though it had been, shot a pang through her heart; and at sight of his felicity a sense of loneliness, such as she had never before experienced, came over her; for her impatient spirit chafed at the notion of lingering under that roof when Pernelle should enter it as mistress. Yet where else should she seek refuge? Then her wild cousin, who had made his appearance in so unexpected a manner that day, occurred to her. He was about to reside near Paris—was married—of an open, joyous temperament—his home, though doubtless but a humble one, would be hospitably open to her—she would demand his protection; and with thoughts of the life she should lead in his sylvan retreat, and her coming pleasure of rambling with him through the crowded streets on the morrow, did Margot busy her fancy until the sun broke through her curtainless window.

Her friends summoned her at an early hour, and she lost no time in leaving the house with them; for Dame Flamel's joyful countenance and overflowing hilarity, the source of which she but too well knew, tried her patience far more than her crossest humour had ever done. Roger's bride was about Margot's age, interesting in person, though the flightiness of her manners soon effaced the favourable impression her appearance at first created. Sundry unconscious revelations, indeed, soon led Margot to imagine that the imprudent connexion her cousin had formed was the last blow to his respectability; a conviction which, together with his

frank avowal of the distress they had already endured, and were likely to endure before he had "struggled through," as he expressed it, depressed her sorely, completely overthrowing the fallacious hopes connected with this couple which she had indulged overnight. During the early part of the day she was insensible to the efforts of passing groups to attract her attention, and dull to the keen encounters of wit kept up by her own party and those who would enter the lists with them. When, however, she had sufficiently chewed the bitter cud of disappointment, her mind, with the elasticity of youth, recovered its tone, and she determined to be merry that day at least, though she should be sad all the rest of her life.

She laughed as loud as any one when, in allusion to the rapacity of the church, reverend foxes, mounted on platforms and decorated with clerical badges, plucked and devoured all the innocent fowls who came to place themselves under their protection—she gazed with interest on the gay cavalcades—listened and smiled at the songs of itinerant musicians, among whom she vainly sought the fairy form of the gleemaiden, whose sweet tones had charmed her on the previous day. Often, too, among the wild tenants of the air, land, and water, and the fantastic creations of poets and trouveres, did she seek the fiercer creatures

of other climes; but the king of the forest was nowhere visible.

Roger and his friends, who had resumed their ordinary costumes to escort the females, had trouble enough to screen them from the rude admiration of many an untaught bazochien, whose valour was not proof for more than a few seconds against the fierce looks of himself and his companions. Still no incident or encounter of any particular interest to Margot had yet occurred, and she was about to propose to her cousin to seek some other locality, when a pilgrim approached, and, affably saluting her party, unceremoniously added himself to their number. Despite the sweeping robe, patch over the eye, and slouched hat, adorned with cockleshells, the well-remembered accents betrayed Almeric d'Aulnoy to Margot's beating heart. Was it dread that made it throb? If so, the gentle tones, the flattering words of the false pilgrim but too soon dispelled it; and though his homage was not more respectful than on the eve, yet, offered in a more acceptable form, and unaccompanied by the rude bantering of youthful rakes, it was repulsed with native dignity, indeed, but without anger. His society made the hours fly; and when Margot reentered her small dark abode that evening her head swam-the whole day appeared to her like a dream, which, to remember was sin and folly; yet, to forget was well nigh impossible.

QUEER PEOPLE.

BY JOHN ALLEN.

INTRODUCTION.

"I observe," says Isaac Disraeli, and no doubt with great truth, "that a prefacer is generally a most accomplished liar." We lay no claim to be considered an exception to the general rule, and, therefore, with a candour uncommon to liars, quote the above passage for the purpose of putting the reader upon his guard against placing too great a faith in anything that this introduction may set forth; and, having thus warned, must leave him to take care of himself.

As we prepare to commence a series of papers under the above head, we cannot help feeling that, supposing his strength to be of the proper order for the job, the assistance of a gentleman of the name of Hercules, or of some one even a shade stronger than he, would be eminently serviceable to us. The title is certainly short, and apparently simple; but there lurks beneath its seeming simplicity the depth of still waters, and beneath its seeming lightness a weight and magnitude, to a gentleman of weak nerves alarming, not to say appalling; for in those two brief and common words, "queer people," appear to our imaginative brain innumerable and incomprehensible multitudes of folk of every grade and class, and every letter seems to contain a whole army of characters ready for our pen. Had not the title already graced another work, we are not quite sure that we should not have headed these papers "The World we Live in;" working on the principle that that people compose the world, and that every one of those people is, in some respect or other, queer. But that title, we say, has already done duty in another quarter, as has also, "All the World and his Wife;" and being thus debarred from using two titles, either of which would have been very appropriate for the present work, we pounced (with great timidity) upon "Queer People."

Be not alarmed, oh, reader! Do not fear that because all the world is undoubtedly queer, more than a tithe of it is about to figure in these pages. We doubt not that in one place and another there is "room enough for all;" but, as we have room here for only a limited number, we must leave the rest to find shelter elsewhere. We have only room, we repeat, for a limited number, and that number must be as proper and select as a set of grand jurymen in Ireland or at the Coal Hole. In other words, out of the interminable quantity of people who are queer, it shall be our study to pick out and introduce the queerest, or those with whom we happen to be best acquainted, and whom we think most worthy of introduction. stout, blustering old gentleman, and you the calm, the most unruffled and unruffleable man, and you, oh, lion, most admired! monarch of all you survey, and of more; and, madam, much as we regret it, we must have ladies amongst our people-what company was ever complete without them? You, too, "most potent, grave, and reverend signiors," must perform upon this stage, and you, and you, and — We will conclude this

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paragraph with a theatrical quotation, and say, "Children in arms cannot

possibly be admitted."

It may now become a question as to what we mean by "queer," and this we find difficult to answer precisely at present, as it is used so often and in so very many different ways. The young gentleman who does not understand what it is to be a ladies' man, and who is devoid of the art of paying them the little attentions they justly expect, is of course not remarkably popular with them; and, laying their lovely heads together as he goes past them, they are unanimously agreed that he is a very queer young man. And when the accomplished beau has flirted the night away with pretty Miss So-and-so, and has charmed her exceedingly, the same word is applied to him; but he takes it rather as a compliment than otherwise when she gives him a playful tap on the shoulder, and, with a bewitching smile, informs him that he is a queer being. No one likes to be nearer than he can help to the sour and cross old Noggle—he is so very queer; but everybody is desirous of the company of the lively and goodhumoured Waggs, for he is so queer a fellow. The man who has been hardly dealt by will pull a long face, heave a deep sigh, and say, in a melancholy tone of voice, that it is a queer world, a very queer world; whilst the man who has met with some rare good fortune, at whom the world has thrown some wonderful piece of good luck, will give an inward chuckle, or a hearty laugh, and say the same. Certainly, we shall not find all queer people good, and heaven forbid that they should be all bad; they will be all mixed up together, and, like a bundle of jokes, will consist of good, bad, and mediocre. Our classing amongst these people the very fast sort of man shall not vouch for our excluding the steady-going gentleman, and the extremely slow; and our seeing something odd in the man who parts with a civil word as a miser with a bag of gold, shall not preclude our seeing in him, who will smile fixedly at you with a red-hot face for an hour, and who will shake your hand till your arm ache, something that may be denominated queer. Neither shall-

But we must not here inform the gracious reader of all the people we intend to introduce; our doing so would be like giving an index before writing a book, which would be a rather unusual proceeding, and which would be attended with awkwardness if it disagreed materially with the contents of the work. People grumble a good deal about not having a catalogue of the books in the British Museum; what would they say if they had a catalogue without the books? What would the world say if it found the worthy librarian hard at work drawing up a long list of imaginary books? Who knows? Perhaps that it was better occupation than "drawing up" imaginary booksellers, in doing which he is supposed

at present to occupy his hours of meditation.

And now we cannot promise the reader that his own portrait will not be here; but of this we can assure him, namely, that he will never know it to be. It may stand, face to face with him, a very queer portrait indeed, and it may bow, and scrape, and hold out its hand to him familiarly, but he in return is sure not to know it, and to treat it with all the reserve and coldness of a perfect stranger. Not a stranger neither, for, supposing the reader to be Mr. Smith, he will at once see that the portrait is the very image of Mr. Watkins; while if Mr. Watkins's own portrait takes off its hat to him, his discrimination will tell him at a

glance that it is Johnson's undoubted likeness. And so Smith and Watkins will each innocently smile. A man might live with his own ghost for years, and if it happened to be an ugly one, all the world could not persuade him but that it was the ghost of some one else. And so it makes very little difference whether any reader's portrait be here or not, since, if it be, he will never know it:

His own dear self no imaged fool will find, But see a thousand other fops designed.

And now to begin.

I.

THE MAN WITH "SOME LIFE IN HIM."

Lest the reader should be led, from the heading of this chapter, to suppose that we are about to draw portraits of invalids, thinking that people, by having some life in them, must necessarily be possessed of a considerable amount of death, we hasten at once to proclaim that such is no part of our present intention; for us such pictures have no charms whatever, and thoughts of such subjects are extremely unpalatable. Therefore, reader, settle your fears, cheer up, and read; and, if you do not already, you soon shall know what we mean by the man who has "some life in him."

This personage has probably a different idea of the word "life" to the reader. Johnson's definition of it he utterly despises. Why, according to that, sir, a clergyman, or a schoolmaster, or a man frightfully genteel, or a nice young man, or, in short, any one who is alive, has life in him. So has a cart-horse, or a bat, or an owl. But life in its true sense is only enjoyed by himself, and by others like him, the chosen of the earth. It is a mockery to say that other people have anything like life in them, or that they are alive; they are only half alive—and half dead. Life, the real genuine thing life, is a blessing known only to fast men; a floating bottle, that is never to be grasped except by those jolly dogs that are con-

tinually making a splash in the water.

Charles Lamb distinguished the two races of men as the men who We would distinguish them as the fast borrow and the men who lend. and the slow. Yet, perhaps, they are the same; the men who borrow being the fast or cunning, the men who lend the slow or dull. To the former race, then, the man with some life in him belongs. He is a being of the most singular habits, as the reader will believe when we say that he is supposed to subsist entirely on Welsh rarebits, brandy-andwater, and stout, and to live without ever going to bed. He is also said to be on very intimate terms with all the actresses and ballet-girls on the stage, and, to number among his friends, all the comic actors, or, at any rate, all those worth knowing. Not being proud he is not ashamed of being seen sitting behind a "pot of stout," nor is he above holding confidential converse with a waiter, or tossing for goes of brandy with a He is likewise harmless and free from malice. If he demolishes a door-knocker, it is only for fun; if he knocks down an old woman at midnight, it is only for the sake of a little life. Tragedy owes its birth to Bacchus, according to ancient history and modern experience.

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He delights in the opera, which is always succeeded by the Cider Cellars, and, having been in the sun there some hours, he, "like a creeping sunbeam," prepares to go home—his progress thither being merely interrupted by his ringing a few dozen of bells, and hammering at a corresponding number of street-door knockers, smashing a lamp-glass, and, on a policeman's coming up, smashing him too; and finally, by his being conveyed to the station-house, where he is kindly supplied with apartments till the day advances. In a damp cell, on a cold, hard bench, "after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well," and awakes to appear before a magistrate and pay a fine. He soon forgets the fine though, and the magistrate too—or when he remembers them at all, he does so with pleasure, refers to the whole affair with laughter, and says there is nothing like life.

The man with some life in him, we may be sure, is fond of a joke—he must have his joke, and if he cannot afford a new one, which is often the case, he is good-natured enough to put up with an old one; and if he cannot make one for himself, he will philosophically make use of somebody else's as if it were his own. His favourite jokes are practical, and a frequent indulgence in this kind of amusement gives him an indis-

putable right to take his place amongst the bores of society.

In the character of a bore he shines pre-eminently; it is his favourite part as an actor on the world's stage, and a part that he generally sustains as well as any actor—from Roscius to Phelps—ever did sustain a part. It would be tedious work to enumerate the different ways in which his boredom displays itself. Take his visit to a theatre as an instance.

As we said before, he is not proud, and when he goes to a theatre he is frequently not above taking his seat in one of those "high-lows" of society—a sixpenny gallery. It appears to be an understood thing that the farther you are from the stage the greater noise you may make; or there would appear to be a sort of jealous rivalry between the actors on the stage and the spectators in the gallery, in which they are severally struggling to be heard by each other. Generally, however, it is a failure on both sides. Consequently, when the man with some life in him visits the gallery he exercises the usual prerogative, and talks as loud as he well can with a due regard to his lungs. But his favourite part of the house is the upper tier of boxes, which he visits at half price—the afterpieces being all that he cares about—in company with a friend or two of congenial taste and habits. Taking his place against some attentive person—an old gentleman rather deaf, perhaps—he commences his criticism and theatrical small talk, explaining what Brown will do in the next act, and intimating that he has improved in his acting or grown worse, as the case may be. How Jones would be a good actor if it were not for his legs, and Smith a better if he had got a better voice, and so on to the end, when he and his friends retire to the Cellars, and the deaf gentleman goes home exceedingly puzzled to make out which dialogue proceeded from the stage and which from his immediate neighbourhood. But for the man with some life in him to distinguish himself, give him Jullien's Concerts, where he can have his lark by-in conjunction with his merry companions—forming a ring, and within it half squeezing to death, struggling, fainting women. That's something like life you

know. None of your petty puns or witty sayings, but a good, honest, practical joke—a regular John Bull affair. The only drawback attending the thing is, that everybody does not see with the eyes of the practical joker. Magistrates, especially, are remarkable for being unable to see the fun of the thing. While touching upon Jullien's Concerts, we must not forget to refer particularly to the original genius who threw the effigy of a woman from the gallery, and which nearly broke the neck of a gentleman in the promenade. We regret that his name is unknown, that his history is hidden from the world. He ought to take his place amongst the humorists of the nineteenth century. What a theme he would be for Mr. Thackeray to lecture upon! What a character for the Book of Snobs!

Altogether it would appear that he is a rather uncomfortable sort of individual; a man who is never happy out of a crowd, and who, being in

one, is ever treading on his neighbour's toes.

Our man patronises races. Well, say he goes down to Epsom. Drives down in company with three or four similar spirits. Having arrived there, it would appear, from the zest with which he drinks it, that brandy were a luxury to be had nowhere off the Epsom race-course. (In this we allow he is not singular: a race-course always puts us in mind of a pic-nic party of all nations, where every one seems as hungry and as thirsty as a pit at a theatre between the acts, and to have come to the course for the sole purpose of getting a never-ending dinner.) He is not strong-minded—an American young lady would laugh him to scorn and he becomes elevated; loses all the little dignity he had; allows gipsy women to tell him his fortune; notwithstanding its being a rainy day, has the dust brushed off his clothes three or four times; requests a party of niggers to play "Dandy Jem;" and commits a number of other absurd pleasantries. In returning home he very probably makes a sofa of the floor of the trap (they are all traps at race times), and though, as he all the way home persists in smiling inanely at nothing at all, he looks very much like a figure of waxwork "used up," he calls this "something like life."

He has a great antipathy to anything slow. Weddings do not suit him (in this respect, at least, he shows himself to be possessed of sense), there is so much crying, then so much speaking, then so much silence, that he cannot do with them. Visiting funerals we scarcely need say he holds in utter abhorrence. He never goes to one if he can help it. We would have said he never goes at all, had we not once been acquainted with a young man of the class who did once visit one. Certainly it would have been better for him if he had been seized with a slight attack of cholera in the morning, and so have been prevented; but he went. We will tell the reader how it happened.

For the sake of the family we will not disclose the gentleman's name; but an aunt of his was dead, and she had died bequeathing him a good fat legacy; unfortunately, as we shall hereafter see, it was bequeathed conditionally, and he was invited to the funeral. Averse as he might be to funerals in general, he could not decline to go to this one in particular; so he went, to show his sorrow and respect for his aunt and the legacy, and with great study and perseverance had managed to get his features into a form somewhat suitable to the occasion. Till some time

after the corpse had been interred he kept his features in this dismal state, and there is every reason to believe that his laudable conduct would have been strictly adhered to to the end of the chapter, had he not par-But the ladies present having introduced a species of taken of tea. liquor called rum into the weaker beverage, he partook of tea—and rum -and fell. The more the ladies drank, the more melancholy they became; the more our friend imbibed, the more lively he felt himself, and yet he looked sorrowful. Another cup did it though, after he had taken which he good-humouredly cracked a favourite joke. Instead of its being answered by a laugh, however, a look of intense and indignant surprise was assumed by all the company. He mistook its silence; thought the joke was not strong enough to make them laugh, and tried another, of Grimaldi power. It was too much, however, for his companions: perhaps they did not like the jokes, or perhaps they did not admire jokes at all; whichever it was, he was turned from amongst them, ejected from the house, and so ended his visit to his aunt's funeral. Would we could say that his misfortunes ended here, too! We cannot; for the legacy, as we have before stated, was left conditionally; that condition was, that he was to have the money, "providing," such were the words of the will, "he conducts himself, after my decease, in a proper and becoming manner." We may here remark that the nephew's fast predilections had doubtless influenced the aunt in making this proviso. The executors considered joking in her house immediately after her burial anything but proper and becoming behaviour, and they refused to let him have the legacy. Yet he might have got it had he stopped here, but, being thwarted in obtaining the money, he became gayer even than was his wont, and his conduct at length became such, that the executors did not feel themselves justified in letting him have the money, and he never got it.

Still, even this did not put the life out of him, or, if it did, brandy-and-water soon put it into him again, in which he indulged and indulges to a larger extent than he had ever done before; and he goes on to this day taking it in enormous quantities whenever he can get it, which is not always, for he is now very poor, and goes principally on what is vulgarly termed "tick;" which word is intended to liken a person who is obliged to go on credit to a watch, which, when it does not tick, is at a complete

stand-still.

There are a great many people who lay claim to having some life in them, who have not the slightest right to do so. With such we shall have nothing whatever to do. Many of them are persons in a high state of wretchedness, and the reader may know them at a glance to be imposters. Most people, too, some time or other, profess to admire, and the most sedate will now and then admit that they like to see a little life. Dr. Johnson once told Boswell that he considered himself a good-humoured fellow, and (speaking of the doctor with all due reverence) many people consider they have some life in them, who have just as large an amount of it as Dr. Johnson had of good-humour.

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II.

PEOPLE WHO ARE "OPEN TO CONVICTION."

As a nation we are liberal: as individuals we are remarkably liberal. We are, every one of us, unbigoted, free from prejudice, and willing to hear both sides of a subject. The Roman Catholic cursing his brother, who happens to be a Protestant, is entirely unbigoted, take his word for it; and the Protestant doing the same kindness for his brother, who is a Roman Catholic, is very liberal in religious matters, on his own authority. Certainly, people cannot always agree; they don't profess to do that, they

are merely impartial, unbiassed, and open to conviction.

These papers are unpolitical; but we cannot help saying that we know Mr. Robinson, the Free-trader, and Mr. Smithson, the Protectionist, very well. They talk incessantly to each other and against each other, both in public and in private; refer to each other, at one time as my worthy friend, and at another as that consummate humbug; and so they go on, smiling and frowning, praising and depreciating, always discussing, never agreeing, but ever open to conviction. Open to conviction! Yes; but conviction is too large a thing for the chasm. You might as well open a gate three feet wide for a man-of-war to enter, or expect a pint bottle

to hold a pint of ale.

The man who is open to conviction is, generally speaking, a perfect bore; and, if you have not got a very amiable temper, the man of all others whom you will do well to avoid. You wish to spread your principles, and you think this man would be an acquisition to your cause, and you therefore take upon yourself to explain to him the nature of things. You go on laying it down to him, no doubt pluming yourself at the time with the idea that you are doing it in grand style, "And so, you know, sir," &c., "In the first place," &c., "Then in the second," and so on; "Now when we come to look," and away you go, "you will see, sir—Hallo! why, you are asleep! this is fine listening, this is! this is your boasted liberality—your openness to conviction. I am astonished, sir—I am astonished!" And no doubt you are astonished; but he is not, oh no; but awaking quite coolly, and with all the assurance in the world, says, "Oh yes, sir, 'tis all very fine your talking, but it's gammon, sir; but go on, if you think proper, I'll hear you; I am always open to conviction, but it will not be you that will convince me." So if you have no more sense you begin again, and, as he is a man to whom you are going to explain things, he very naturally prepares himself for another nap until you have done.

We once knew a man who boasted greatly of his openness to conviction, and we remember his discussing a subject with a little man who could not be brought to think with him. Our friend waxed wrath at the little man's obduracy, and, when he saw he could not convince him, he knocked him down. Satisfaction was demanded by the little man, who got it from our friend in the shape of a leaden bullet, which killed him; and the man who killed him did all this because, as he said, he was always open to conviction himself, and liked to see other people the same.

Tell Mr. Anybody that his friend's politics are foolish, and his own wise, and he pleasantly agrees with you, gives you credit for great discri-

mination, and wonders that his friend should be so obstinate, so decidedly dead to conviction. But reverse the case, and say that his friend is right and he wrong, and he looks icily cold, says it may be so, should be happy to be convinced, quite willing to be, &c. But, unless you are a very bold man, the look with which he says it, repels you from uttering another word.

After long study on this long subject we cannot better end this short chapter than by saying that we are really convinced, that not only things rational, but also things irrational, and even things inanimate are open to conviction; that the hippopotamus, Aldgate pump, the posts in Seven Dials, and in short everything else is open to conviction equally as much as the men who make a boast of this virtue; that the only thing wanted is a person clever enough to convince them, that when such person has convinced the men, he will find no difficulty in doing the synonymous for the hippopotamus, &c. and vice versâ. Is the reader convinced?

III.

THE MAN WHO IS "NOT TO BE PUT UPON."

No man, woman, or child will be mad enough to deny, that to some people

The pleasure is as great Of being cheated as to cheat;

or for one moment to question the truth of the assertion, made by Thomas Hood, that

A certain portion of the human race Has certainly a taste for being diddled.

Yet there are others of a directly opposite nature, who derive infinitely greater satisfaction from being the diddlers than from being the diddled; and others, who are a kind of go-between third party, who would not wrong anybody themselves for the world, yet are fully as decided not to be wronged themselves, cheated, or put upon. With this class we have

at present to deal.

We found ourselves the other day about to undertake a journey per steamer. Before embarking, our attention was arrested by an intended passenger, who was violently struggling with a man belonging to the boat, who had "collared" him, and seemed fully bent on dragging him on board. We were somewhat surprised at the man's seeming so disinclined to comply with the boatman's wishes, when we knew that he wanted to go to the place whither the boat was going; but the boatman was overcome, the man would not go with him, but immediately made his way to the opposition boat, murmuring as he went, "No, he would not catch me going with him. I would have gone if he had not asked me to go, but when people are so very anxious about you, they are invariably meditating mischief, and I am not to be put upon." We followed him, and determined, in order to see more of the man, to go by the same boat; on reaching which we began to be alarmed lest our friend should decline performing the journey at all, for he would not allow a porter to touch his luggage, but hugged it affectionately, and grasped it tightly on that official's attempting to carry it on board for

him. He had once, he said, had some luggage stolen from him at a railway-station, and no one should ever interfere with his carpet-bag again. It was certainly rather improbable that the porter would decamp with them, but what of the probability of the thing? Was there a possibility? There was; and he must guard against it. (This sort of man is always suspicious, to madness. To speak uncommonly grammatically, we should describe his face as an incarnation of the subjunctive mood, a perpetual living utterance of "If he, she, or it may, might, could, would, or should put upon me.") He therefore would not hear of anything but that he must carry the luggage on board himself, which he forthwith manfully set about. He had been on shore and had returned five times, when the boat began to move, he leaped on shore again, and as soon as he had got his last article the boat was off the beach. With a tremendous leap he reached the deck, but in doing so his article of luggage fell overboard. It was lost beyond redemption. He had only time, after the shake the leap had given him, to look over the boat and see his best carpet-bag disappear beneath the waves. "There," shouted the porter, "if you had let me help you, you would not have lost that." He was

answered by a groan.

Our friend seemed decided, however, that that should be the only luggage he would lose, for he soon set about carrying all he had left down into the cabin, where he spread it before him, and kept his eye continually rivetted on it. Continually, we said, but not with propriety, for he seemed new to a seafaring life, and soon began to exhibit symptoms of sickness, and in consequence found it extremely difficult to keep his eye fixed in any particular quarter. It soon wandered to the sky; he was evidently, and, under the circumstances, naturally anxious to be in the open air. On the steward's coming forward and intimating that he would be better there, he, however, changed his mind, and determined not to leave the cabin. What! they wanted to put upon him! The cabin must be better than the deck as the inside of a coach is better than the outside. They wanted to put him in the worst place, and he had paid his fare, and would not allow it. No: he was sick, he did not deny it (how could he?), and he would be sick ten times before he would be cheated. So he remained below, pale, sick, and groaning, just to let the people see that he was not to be trifled with—a man not to be put upon.

We left the cabin, being in misery to see him in such a state. We saw him again at landing though, and the last glance we caught of him he was haggling with a cabman. Who can say what became of him?

It is a favourite notion of ours that people show their real characters as vividly in a railway carriage as they do anywhere. There you soon discover the agreeable man, who enters into conversation with you as soon as the train has started, or before, and the taciturn, distant man, who never opens his mouth during a long journey. You may generally rely upon it that the agreeable man is naturally agreeable, and the taciturn man naturally taciturn; for where all are perfect strangers, few people will give themselves the trouble to dissemble, as so many—ay, as all—of us do in company where we are known, and where it may be our desire or our benefit to please. So in the railway carriage you may see the old book-worm, who reads his dry work incessantly, and the butterfly,

who glances at all the articles in a cheap magazine and reads none of them. The sweet-tempered young lady contrasts strangely with the strong-minded woman; and by the side of the good-natured man, the

man who is not to be put upon stands out in bold relief.

This last-named personage is far from being a desirable travelling companion. He purchases the Times before the train starts, and before paying for it is very careful to see that it is for the day, also that the supplement is there, although he never reads it. To make sure of not paying the newspaper boy a penny too much, he obtains sixpenny-worth of copper from some passenger, out of which he pays his fivepence, and, having made a cushion of the supplement, and folded the paper to the police reports, prepares to read. Unfortunately, you are soon obliged to interrupt him: as he is seated near the window, which is open, and which causes you to feel chilly, you politely request him to close it. As, at first he does not or will not hear you, you repeat your mild request in a rather louder key. He looks up this time, with "daring robbery," reflected from the paper, stamped upon his features, and laconically and interrogatively says, "Sir?"—"Will you be good enough to close the window? It's rather cold." Cold! he feels too warm, and he must have the window open on account of a headache that he has got. He concludes with a hint that you can change your carriage at the next station, and resumes his paper. Ha, ha! you want to put upon him do you?—want the window closed because you see he has it open. He is cold himself, but keeps it open, thereby starving himself and you too, and he will be starved, and starved again, rather than be put upon.

He was once known to fight with four men at one time, each of them considerably stronger than himself, who he thought had been practising some little deception upon him. He nearly got killed, of course; but he

was not to be put upon.

The same reason actuated him on the following occasion. He had gone with an excursion train one day a many miles from home, and had enjoyed himself very much during the time he had been in the town he had been visiting—he had not been put upon once. The train was ready for starting back, and he had taken his seat, when he suddenly remembered that he had left his umbrella at the hotel where he had been staying. It was the work of an instant (as novelists say) to leap from the carriage, and make his way to reclaim his loss. The cheap train had started ere he got back to the station, and he had to perform his journey home by an ordinary train. The fare was a guinea extra, but then he had rescued his umbrella (non-waterproof, price, when new, five shillings) and, as he wisely remarked, he was determined not to be done even out of that.

We once saw him at a mock auction in London bidding most mercilessly against another man. Our attention was drawn particularly towards the two by our discovering that they were bidding in pounds for an article that shillings, and a very few of them, would have bought dearly. Our friend we recognised at once, and soon saw that the other was a man employed to enhance the price of goods. We could not help laughing at the angry, not-to-be-done look our friend wore. At length he got the

article—and had it been made of silver instead of copper, as it was, it would have been dear—saying, as he left the room, that he would have spent every farthing he had before he would have been robbed out of the article by the dirty-looking rascal who bid against him. Not to be done, again!

And so it often happens with "people who are not to be put upon;" they elude a pound's weight being put upon them only to catch a stone's, and escape from stumbling merely to have a fall; to save themselves a shilling they lose a sovereign, and, not wishing to be roasted or burnt, very sensibly leap out of the frying-pan merely to alight in the fire.

Unfortunate are you if you have got for a friend the man who is not to be put upon. You must watch your every action, and weigh well your words before you give them utterance; for suspicion is the fiend that haunts him-his daily nightmare. He is ever on the watch for prey who would prey upon him, and if he cannot grasp at substances he will pursue shadows. If you invite him to dinner, you must give him the best of everything, the choicest part of every joint, or you impose upon him; and after all, when you have done your best to please him, you are lucky if you do not hear in a few days that he has delivered himself to the effect that you are a very decent, gentlemanly sort of fellow, but that you require to be well looked after, as you will take a man in if you can. Do you give a pic-nic party, and neglect to invite him, he feels himself to be an injured man. Not that he would have gone if you had invited him; but the look of the thing! And if you do invite him, you offend him. What the devil do you mean by inviting a man of his age to join a party of rollicking youngsters? You issue invitations to dinner, and forward one to him, among the rest, which he accepts, but immediately sets about making inquiries of others who are likewise invited, as to what time they received their invitations. He discovers that Jepson received his at three o'clock; now he did not get his till four, and consequently feels himself grievously injured. You have evidently pitched upon him at the eleventh hour (although the invitations may be issued a week before the day appointed) to fill up a hiatus, and this after a friendship of so many yearsit's too bad. He comes to dinner, and is freezingly distant all the time, until he has had his share of wine, when he enters into a little private conversation with you, reminds you of all his kindnesses, and then, with an air of a persecuted saint, says he forgives you. Forgives you! and after a dinner like that. We could fill pages with the enumeration of instances where this man feels himself put upon, but we shall have given sufficient already to show that he is a man who is a perpetual torment to both himself and friends, one who can always see a cloud behind the sun, but never the sun behind a cloud, and sufficient to make the reader exclaim, "Save me from such friends!"

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THE GHOST CHAMBER.

There! it rises before me as I write. A long, low room, wainscoted and tapestried, the windows hung with yellow curtains, through which the daylight enters gorgeously; and the floor shining and black with its polished oak boardings. What strange gleams of light fall across the counterpane from the coloured glass, and outside there is an old rookery, the perpetual cawing of whose inhabitants would fain persuade us that already a whisper of Spring has got abroad upon the air. It has been the state-room of the family, but I see it now as when I sat in it during the long, lonely evening, when the firelight leapt and sparkled on the hearth, and strange smiles flitting over the pictured faces looked down upon me from the walls, when sounding but invisible footsteps run creaking along the boards, and knowledge-like, a guest visited me, whispering "the chamber is haunted!" Yes, haunted, truly! but only by old spirit memories.

The old people who inhabited this room have long since been gathered to their fathers, and it is now their second son who inherits the property. Their portraits hang upon the walls, and look down upon us with something of a life presence still upon them. With stately carriage, and hand placed within his vest, eagle eye, and stern brow, the old man still seems keeping watch over his household. Opposite to him, in hat and feathers, white satin gown, low neck and arms, and all the

acknowledged beauty of a past century, sits smiling his wife.

There is a history connected with these portraits. I think of them in the ghost chamber, where I have been placed by my own desire, and wonder if they ever descended from their grand stateliness to the little familiarities—the sweet social endearments—that twine so lovingly around the intercourse of life. There is an old Judge, with powdered wig, white cravat, and long waistcoat, who frowns down at me from over the mantel-piece; as this question suggests itself mentally, and as I glance across at the family heiress, in all the dignity of shepherdess attire, her crook seems to tremble in her hands, and the very folds of her

dress to stand upright with horror.

But in the ghost chamber I still linger, haunted ever by these memories of the dead. I cannot sleep, so from between the tapestried folds of the bed hanging I still look forth, and behold the heavy chairs cast shadows on the shining boards, and something glides in between them and the firelight, and the seats are occupied. What do I see? Nothing! I only heard the creaking of boards and rustling of garments, but is not that all-sufficient? Do I not know, as plainly as my imagination tells me that it is so, that the figure with the powdered hair, stern brow, and benevolent smile, even now loosening the cravat from his throat, is, in fact, the very owner of the ghost chamber? Does not the lady of the hat and feathers again sit before me? only now she has her hair rolled back off her brow in pyramids of curls, and her stiff silk dress seems to quiver with importance.

You tell me it is the wind that I hear in the chimneys, shadows from the moonlight, creakings from the old boards. Very good, we can both hold our own opinions. But I sleep—yes, even in the ghost chamber! and now the old family histories come sweeping like a strong tide in upon me. I see the household growing up around the old parent stock, and their eldest born, the prodigal, with his dear, warm heart, and ill-advised judgment. There is an old grandmother who is always supplying him with money, ever against the consent, often without the knowledge, of his parents. A stern-looking old lady she seems, with an upright carriage, and a gold-headed cane. The villagers call her "Madam Talbot," and bring all grievances and party quarrels before her. She holds a small court of justice, against which there is no appeal. The village urchins tremble at her anger. Her justice is summary, and she has been known to chain the offender caught stealing apples in the orchard to the bars of the gate—a kind of human scarecrow to trembling brethren! But the one weak spot in her heart is for this grandson. one may blame him; she sees all the noble, generous points in his character; she is quite deaf and blind to his defects. So they grow up. Here is the second brother, the supplanter, wise, correct, calculating, too weak for virtue, and too cold for vice; ever stepping in between his eldest brother and his father. How the breach widens! I seem to see the crust thicken round the hearts of these his kindred; they are, as it were, poisoned, alienated from him, and he is too proud to sue for that pardon he thinks should be his of right. Reckless in his expenditure, careless in his profession, yet so kind, generous, and loving-not even understanding coldness in others. Now the shadow of that second brother falls again across me. I see him taking, as it were, the servant's place in the house, being all things to please all men; such an old-hearted head on such young shoulders. He gives false meanings to the faults of his eldest brother, so that they stand forward in unfavourable light; he implies, suggests-wounded feelings are made rankling sores by the force of his covert insinuations; and so the breach widens.

Now the eldest son has taken to himself a wife—fair, gentle, loving; but, alas! he has consulted but his own pleasure, and has looked for no dowry beyond the single one of virtue. How should he be forgiven? How can he who errs against his own interest ever expect the compassion of others? and, in a world where Mammon is worshipped, how think to live independent? And this, too, must be placed against him. He must not bring his wife to his father's hearth; his hasty choice is to be visited on her, as having entered the family on false pretensions; and the jealous pride of his wounded heart shall be accounted to him as an evil thing. No wonder that the breach widens! We see the second brother becoming everything to his father; he has all the guile of another Esau, so plausible is he with his regrets under the surface of fraternal sorrow; so fair an aspect bears he with so foul a soul! Now he sighs in his superior righteousness over the faults of the prodigal; now he winds himself with unseen coils into the old man's confidence; he has become, as it were, his right hand; he, the stern, proud father, is a slave to his child, and so unconscious a one, that though he cannot do without him, yet he still deludes himself that he possesses ever the same dominant power of old.

There comes a day, however, when the old man is struck with death. It is an awful time. The family crowd round him weeping, wailing, and lamenting; and there he lies, helpless like a little child, unnerved, palsied, trembling in the grasp of the great destroyer. Then better thoughts,

old, long crushed affections return to him; standing, as it were, on the verge of the grave, he sees, as with different eyes, old things are fallen off from him, all things are become new. His hand wanders towards his prodigal son, kneeling at the foot of his bed, weeping hot, burning, passionate tears; he hears the prayer of his spirit poured out for forgiveness, and resting there he bows himself towards him, and with faultering voice blesses him aloud; he tells him that he has disinherited him, that he has bestowed all upon his brother; with feeble motion he points towards his will. But his son, heart-broken, agonised, still kneels before him; he offers no complaint, utters no murmur; only with choked voice he sobs forth, "Oh! let his brother keep all so that he may have his father's forgiveness." And the old man gives it to him. Solemn and slow on the shadowy twilight come forth those words of peace, and in the falling darkness of the ghost chamber there is only heard the strong man's

sobs, and that death-bed blessing.

Now the room is again in stillness, the old man sleeps; and through the long night watches there only remains his daughter, seated patiently by his side; she stoops to screen the lamp-light from his eyes, and suddenly he calls upon her. She starts, for in his face there is an expression all unknown before; his voice is low and faint, but each word, as she catches it, seems to fall upon her ear with solemn meaning. He tells her how, laying there in the long night hours, a voice spoke to him; how men's eyes are opened at the portals of death; and how it was given him to see that far beyond the gains and honours of life, far beyond all its wealth and pleasure, there rests still Heaven's blessing on the large loving heart and liberal spirit; how all things fall off from men in death, but love still lingers. Then he spoke of how he had wronged her brother, passing through life without understanding him-putting forth the angel spirit that had been given him as a blessing. "But mark me, child," he said, and now his voice, before broken, became loud and clear; "I will yet, if God spares me, make restitution. I take you to witness of my purpose, and I lay it on you as my command to bring your brother to me with the daylight that justice may be restored," and with this he moved upon his pillow, turning his face towards the wall, and, as she thought, slept quietly.

But when the morning light came in, flooding the room, the sunbeams fell full on the face of the calm dead; and the daughter's cry of horror gathered in to her all the household. There were voices of lamentation—low dirges—weeping of women—and, with the sound of hushed feet, the dead passed onwards to his long home. The second son inherited the property, for there was none to dispute the will; but the returned prodigal, kneeling in the ghost chamber, offered thanks to God for that his father's heart had been restored to him, and then with a softened heart and a mind at peace, returned again to share the poverty of her

who had chosen him for himself.

Am I dreaming in the ghost chamber? I seem to see still the son reconciled, visiting, as he does yet, sometimes at the house of his brother, the usurper. The ghost chamber is given up to him; he sleeps better in it, he says, than elsewhere; he has always pleasant dreams here. I do not wonder at it; for I know how, when he sleeps, the spirits of the old people still watch over him. I see them in my imagination (you will

not allow me sight) putting aside the tapestried curtains, looking down upon him tenderly. The father has still his smile of benevolence, but his brow has lost all its sternness; he lays his hand upon him and blesses him, and the mother's face is irradiated with gladness! So, even in my dreams, these forms fall off from me, and I wake once more in the ghost chamber to the young day's sunshine, to the cheerful cawing of the rooks at work outside my window; and musing, as I lay, let the sounds of life flood in upon me till my heart is filled with their music, and the spirits of the ghost chamber pass from me to return again with the firelight on the black boards, and the moonbeams stealing in fantastically through the stained windows.

The Dying Seneschal.

[Supposed to be the lamentation of Sir Walter Fitzosbert, one of the five Norman knights who conquered Gwent, and who, if we can believe the chronicle of Ernulphus, was taken prisoner by Sir Geoffry Mauleverer, Lord of Goodrich, and died of famine in the yellow tower of that castle, A.D. 1182.

The knight is dust, And his good sword is rust, And his soul is with the saints we trust.

I DID not think I could have borne So long this dull weight at my heart. The weary night, the lingering day-As loth to dawn as to depart. I never thought this aching brain Could e'er have borne, or borne so long, The torture of this scorn and wrong. All nature's full of liberty: Look at you clouds, how glad they be, They seem fresh loosed from slavery. The wind is free each leaf to kiss On every forest tree that is; I feel it at my prison bars Drive swifter than the falling stars. The stream flows on with ceaseless motion To do glad homage to the ocean. The wild birds wing their unchecked way— None can be more free than they; Yet I, the freest of the free, Rot here in thraldom's infamy. Was never knight so free as I-Free as the falcon in the sky, So blithe, and glad, and debonair-Free as the restless, wandering air— Free as the white trout of the lake-Free as the shy and wily snake. I cared not for the scorching heat, When hot suns on my armour beat; I cared not for the winter's cold, When lambs were frozen in the fold; When it chilled through his dark fur robe the mole, And the dormouse nestling deeper stole, Then would I rest my helmed head Upon a root, the snow my bed.

And I the mountain deer could tire-Could tame the unbroke charger's fire, Could swim the lake, stem swollen ford, Could swim the lake, stem swollen ford,
Though cumber'd with my spear and sword— Could bend the bow of a man of mould— Could track the eagle to his hold.
Fool that I am to waste regret, While with my blood these stones are wet .-Oh! for some human thing to see, Though he came but to mock at my misery— Though he came in grief and shame to share; And, instead of pious word and prayer, 'I'were pleasant as the glimpse of day
To forest-traveller astray.— Beheld me with a cruel stare; I watched me by the live long hour My only friend—a simple flower That grew from a chink in a massive stone, On the parapet 'neath my prison grate, Sprang up untended and alone. I viewed it early, I viewed it late— Was never flower so fresh and fair; And through the balmy summer air It shed a calm repose on me, It shed a calm repose on me,
Like the sight of happy infancy;
God's benison, dear thing, on thee!
I watched the gentle, friendly weed,
Each sweet flower ope, and shed its seed;
But the rough wind plucked off leaf by leaf,
Till nothing was left for me but grief.
Now, at the closing of the day,
I saw the the last one whirled away.
Unhappy wretch! I seem to blight Unhappy wretch! I seem to blight
Even things lovely in my sight.
Twas the only thing I loved, and now, Beshrew the tear, has this pale brow

No greater grief, that it should weep.—

Proud heart, take cheer! I saw it creep

O'er the rude stone that shelter gave,

Where its seed had found a dark, small grave, And strew it with its flowerets fair,
As if it loved God's gifts to share;
For everything but the human brood For everything but the human brood
Hath felt some touch of gratitude.
It rose in spring, and all through May
That wallflower made its silent way;
And every shower that passed o'er
Added but loveliness the more;
And every cloud that by us past
Some bright reflection on thee cast;
The wind that tears the forest-tree
Lent gentle influence to thee.— Lent gentle influence to thee .-Lent gentle influence to thee.—
But, hush thee, tongue! I feel each vein
Throb slower, and a keener pain
Gnaw at my heart: the guarding slave
Shall never hear a true knight crave A look of pity; the wolf dies silent in his den, And so do all the Norman men.

HOW I VISITED WHITECROSS-STREET.

"But, my dear Jones, I assure you I haven't a halfpenny in the world, and had to borrow twopence of the laundress to pay for the tobacco you are now helping me to smoke."

"Well, money I must have; and so, if you can't lend me hard cash,

perhaps you will have no objection to lending me your name."

" How so?"

"On the back of a bill, my dear Smith; let's try what we can do among the Jews."

"Oh, certainly! On the principle of mutual accommodation—we make a fair division of the profits."

I made this remark because I thought it remarkably fast.

"Very well! I'll go and get a stamp, and order in some beer as I come back."

The dramatis personæ in this interesting interlude may now be introduced to the reader. My name is Smith, and the story I am about to narrate, an episode in my eventful life. The other party was called Jones, an acquaintance picked up in a billiard-room, and with whom I had cemented a strong friendship at the Cider Cellars, and many other postmidnight haunts; a very good sort of fellow in the main, possessed of little money but plenty of impudence; and I really think the reason of my "cottoning" to him was the result of a most awkward dilemma he had inveigled me into, out of a pure spirit of mischief, but a few weeks after my forming his acquaintance. I was strolling along the Strand one afternoon when I fell in with him, and after a little conversation he prevailed on me to accompany him down Waterloo-place, as he said he had a visit to pay. All engrossed on the interesting subject of the Derby, I hardly noticed where he conducted me, till I found myself on the doorstep of one of the immense houses in Carlton-gardens, and my friend Jones in possession of the knocker, which he flourished most alarmingly. To my utter horror, on the door being thrown open by a gigantic porter, Jones coolly turned round and said to me,

"Well, old boy, I see you are engaged now, so I'll leave you. We

shall meet as usual."

The sell was perfect. I stood there, looking at one moment at my retreating companion, at another at the hall-porter. I at length stuttered out,

"Does-does Mr. Wilson live here?"

"Oh, go to the devil," was all the answer I got as the door was slammed in my face, and off I sneaked, very glad to be let off on such easy terms. My admiration of Jones conquered my anger, and from that day we became fast friends.

As I was supposed by my affectionate relatives to be studying for the bar, I had chambers in one of those small inns, which seem to be the natural abode of fast men, actors, and Jew attorneys. Jones, for private reasons of his own, preferred spending his days in my rooms instead of remaining at home, and the conversation with which I commenced this paper was the result of one of his visits.

The bill was soon drawn out and accepted, and Mr. Jones agreed to negociate it; it was for fifty pounds, and my net profits on the transaction

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were four pounds seven, as Jones borrowed ten pounds of my share before paying it over to me, and only procured thirty pounds for it, at least so he said; and as he promised to see about the payment of it, I did not like to impose on his good nature by taking more than he could comfortably spare me. It was, however, with great regret I noticed an apparent coldness grow over him at the time when the bill was drawing to maturity, and his visits to my chambers almost entirely ceased. In consequence, I repaid him the four pounds seven, and rested in the pleasing conviction that I should never hear more about it. In this I was disappointed.

One morning, as I was sitting over a late breakfast, or rather waiting for a mutton-chop the laundress had gone out to order, I heard a knock at the door. With cheerful alacrity I rushed to open it, when I saw two gentlemen, I suppose I must call them, for one of them, at least, was so by act of Parliament. The other took out his pocket-book, and displayed to me a stamped document I fancied I had seen before. By heavens! it was the bill! which Jones must have unaccountably neglected to meet. I hastily began to assure them that he was the person they must look to as I had washed my hands of the whole affair. With a bland smile the legal gentleman informed me that Mr. Jones, they found on inquiry, had emigrated to Australia, and in the hurry of his departure had neglected to provide for the bill, and I must have the kindness to meet it. With a considerable quantity of bad language, I declared I would be off to Australia after him, for I was not going to pay it. The gentlemen bowed and left me.

In the course of the same evening, when I went out to my dinner, I noticed two suspicious-looking men lounging near the porter's lodge, and holding mysterious converse together. I did not pay much attention to them at first, but, as I saw that they followed me down the street, I quickened my pace, and had the satisfaction of losing sight of them. After enjoying my dinner I strolled out of the door, but to my great surprise saw the same two men waiting outside. I felt considerably annoyed, and still more so when the dirtier and more splendidly dressed of the two tapped me familiarly on the shoulder, saying in a hoarse, jarring voice,

"I wants to speak with yer."

I assumed my most indignant air, and stepped on one side to hear his communication, when he whispered in my ear,

"I arrests you at the suit of Mr. Abednego Amos. It's all right Jem,"

he then said to his companion.

I was quite convinced there was some confusion of identities, for I had never heard of such a person as him rejoicing in this alliterative cognomen, and, indeed, began to express my opinion on the matter to my new acquaintance, when he interrupted me by remarking, "Lord bless yer, sir, we never makes mistakes—does we, Jem? It's all serene. Will yer go to the Lock-up, or straight to Vitecross-street?" The first appeared to my inexperience the lesser evil, and we got into a cab, which carried us to the neighbourhood of Chancery-lane. I was soon ushered into the presence of a gent., who, I am prepared to make affidavit, was brother to the person who called upon me in the morning, and under his guidance made my first entrance, and, I trust, my last, into the coffeeroom of a sponging-house.

Three persons were here assembled, playing at three-handed cribbage

with a dirty pack of cards, and smoking vigorously, apparently to the great annoyance of a stout gentleman, who was leaning out of the window and coughing, evidently to the great delight of his companions, who considered his uncomfortable position a source of supreme satisfaction. Every now and then he turned round, and cried out, between his fits of coughing, "Can't yer leave off smoking for a minute, ye etarnal blackguards?" but all the answer he got was a fresh puff of smoke. I was civilly invited to make one in the rubber, but the look of the cards was enough to frighten me, leaving out of the question the aspect of the players, who had not shaved for at least a week, and were all more or less inebriated.

My reveries were broken in upon by the entry of a very dirty waiter, who came round to collect the bed money, amounting to the moderate charge of six shillings a night; the accommodation, a large garret, containing eight small beds and one wash-stand-hot water to be paid for as an extra. My first night was anything but comfortable, broken in upon as it was by the perpetual snoring of two of the party, and the coughing of the Irishman, who could not free his throat from the smoke. I was glad to get up in the morning to a breakfast, for which I was charged four-and-sixpence, and consisting of watery tea and bread-and-butter. My first care was to send for my solicitor—that is to say, not mine, but the family one—and a messenger was soon procured, who, for the sum of three-and-sixpence, consented to fetch him. To my great annoyance, he did not seem at all affected at finding me in the hands of the Philistine, but joked about it, and said I had always wanted to see life, and could now enjoy one of its phases at my leisure. In an explanation with the man of the house, he soon saw how matters stood. I had been arrested on a "ne exeat," obtained by the affidavits of the truth-telling Abednego Amos and his friend, that I was indebted to the former, and had expressed an intention of quitting the country. My solicitor left me, with the intimation that he would try to make some arrangement with the party, and communicate with the "governor."

Mr. Amos was not, however, to be choked off; he knew the money was eventually safe, and would not, therefore, abate one jot of his demand. The governor, on being appealed to, insisted on my making my own arrangements as to liberation: he had a duty to perform to his other children, and so on. My mother sent me a ten-pound note, and a long letter on the cruelty of keeping me confined; but still, for all that, I remained in the Lock-up. At the expiration of four days I felt heartily tired of the place, and in spite of the warnings of the master of the house, determined on changing my quarters for Whitecross prison. Many of my readers are, I trust, unaware where this interesting locality may be found: my own vague impressions are that it is somewhere near the Bank, and not far from Smithfield-at least, there is a church near, called Cripplegate, the clock of which performs various tunes to enliven the detenus. On my arrival, late on the Saturday night, I was ushered into the lodge, where the customary performances of delivering my body over, &c., were gone through, and my portrait taken. After this I was led into the receiving-room, where I was to remain till the ensuing

Monday.

My first impressions of a prison were far from unpleasing. Four per-

sons were seated before a comfortable fire, drinking port wine and cracking walnuts, and I found, on forming their acquaintance, that they were bound for the Queen's Bench, and consequently would not be sent down into the wards. From their conversation, I was induced to believe them most shamefully injured men; but I afterwards found this was the case with every man, without exception, at that time residing in her Majesty's The warden of the room was a venerable fellow, who had been in prison fourteen years, for the combined offences of smuggling and contempt of court. He had grown grey in her Majesty's service, and it was whispered had made a comfortable fortune in his capacity of warden, by providing meals, clean sheets, &c., for the thousands who passed through his hands on their passage to the innermost recesses of the prison. It was, in truth, an excellent change for me, from the dirt and extravagant charges of the Lock-up. My dinner, consisting of roast beef and pudding, &c., cost me eighteenpence, while at the former hole I had been forced to pay three-and-sixpence for a blackened mutton-chop, which had been subjected to the peine forte et dure of a herring-smelling gridiron. I had plenty of hot water for lavatory purposes, gratis; and last, not least, excellent bottled porter, at a slight per centage on publichouse prices. During the course of the Sunday we had a visit from the chaplain, who politely invited us to chapel, but we were all too much interested in hearing the artless tale of a poor old rustic, who had been dragged away from his home for the sum of eighteenpence. It seemed he owed a doctor's bill for his missus, and was put in the county court. The decision was that he must pay the amount by instalments of eighteenpence a week: he failed in one payment, and the consequence was he was carried off and confined in prison, and Heaven knows when he would get out! Surely our laws want reforming! We got up a small subscription for him, and bought him a quarter of a pound of tobacco, for on the poor side of the prison, where he would be confined, no beer or tobacco were allowed.

On the Monday morning I was conducted into the prison by one of the turnkeys, who civilly gave me some few hints as to my conduct, above all, recommending me always to keep my carpet-bag locked, if I wished to lose nothing, for I might not know whom I should meet. This was in many respects true; for, after a few hours incarceration, I recognised dozens of faces I had missed suddenly from the sunny side of Regent-street, and who still tried to impose by the gorgeousness of their waistcoats and cravats. My destination was No. 4 Ward, where I was introduced in due form. The regulations of the hotel were then read to me, and by them I found I was called upon to pay a guinea, to render me free of the prison. For this money I was entitled to coals, newspapers, cooking, boot-cleaning, use of knives and forks, crockery, and hot water; would never be called upon to pay anything more, let me stay as long as I pleased, and, in addition, receive a bonus at the end of each month, averaging from one shilling to three. The government appeared to be a limited republic: there was a chairman and vice, a council of four, a treasurer, and a secretary. Their duties were also limited. The governor entrusted them with the maintaining due order, prevention of gambling, &c.; and these duties they honestly enough fulfilled. Each day, after calling over at four o'clock, the council sat, to listen to any

complaints, and fine offending parties, and to sell the newspapers of the day by auction. Of these, we had a copy of each daily paper, and all the Sunday ones; even the *Morning Post* was represented. The chairman and council were elected monthly, and these elections usually

led to many amusing incidents.

As it is impossible to live on the prison allowance, a very ingenious provision had been made. The money received for footing, &c., was lent to an individual, who therewith provided meals for all who liked to live at his table; and, strange to say, though he gave credit, he very seldom lost any money. His meals were all regulated by an established tariff, and though no one was debarred from making use of the public cook and fire, still many joined his table. Among the articles I hired from him were a feather-bed, sheets, blankets, and pillow, for the sum of half-a-crown a week: very necessary articles, as the prison allowance

consists of a hard mattress and a thin counterpane.

The Middlesex side of the prison is a quadrangle, containing three wards, with sleeping-rooms above them, and built round a large flagged pavement, where the prisoners walk, talk to their friends, &c. A tall spiked wall separates it from the poor side of the prison, where county court prisoners, &c., are confined, as well as all debtors who are remanded by the Insolvent Court for a period above six months. Here imprisonment is really a punishment: compelled to live on the coarsest fare, debarred from the use of tobacco and beer, the prisoners are left to think on their various iniquities, and regard honesty as the best policy. On the other side of the wall all is different. There is a beer-shop open from twelve to two, and from seven to nine in the evening, where the debtor may drink as much as he pleases, as long as he can pay for it; add to this a butter and egg-shop, and the reader will see that the corporeal welfare of the prisoner was not neglected.

Under these circumstances, it may be imagined that imprisonment is a mere farce; it only renders the fraudulent debtor more callous, and the really honest man, who, from unavoidable circumstances, is thrown

into such society, cannot touch pitch without being defiled.

On the first night of my abode in a prison, I was called upon to "stand beer for the bedroom;" with this request I complied, and the strange bed-fellows I had got acquainted with clubbed together to have it converted into egg-flip. The servant of the room, a salaried personage, was entrusted with the duty of carrying it up, and this was permitted without any turnkey interfering. The consequence was that they all, to the number of six, got remarkably drunk, and, after singing a variety of songs, commenced the most infernal charivari, it was ever my ill luck to hear. Talk of the House of Commons, when a droning member is on his legs, it was a Quaker's meeting to this! broom-handles were broken up, and employed in beating the iron supports of the bedstead; jugs were hurled frantically down the stairs against the iron-gates on the landings; boots flying in every direction; and, as a climax, they joined together and pulled up one of the bedsteads by sheer strength and sent it crashing down the stairs. This roused the turnkeys, and a visit from them, with a threat of the black hole, produced some slight effect. At length they crawled into bed, and I was enabled to sleep. My slumbers endured but a short time, for a violent combat of two soon

commenced, one man accusing the other of trying to pick his pockets; but as he had nothing in them, on examination, he was cobbed as a salutary example. At eight o'clock the doors were thrown open, and all permitted to leave the sleeping wards; which if they did not succeed in

by ten o'clock, the doors were again locked till two.

The daylight amusements consisted in reading the newspapers, playing chess, dominoes, or draughts; no dice were allowed, but cards after six in the evening. The chief occupation, however, seemed to be in hunting up spirits; mainly, I believe, because they were not permitted ingress, though there was always plenty to be had. Wine was allowed to enter in the proportion of a quarter of a bottle to each man, but it was no difficult task to get together enough names for half a dozen. The meals were most excellent, quantities of geese and turkeys, fowls and fish, and seldom exceeded 1s. 6d. a head; the breakfast equally so—cold meat, tea and coffee, toast, &c., for 1s. It would put many an innkeeper to the blush to see the meals provided in a prison on such moderate terms. From ten till one, and from two till four, friends were admitted into the prison, and very few seemed to come without a drop of comfort in the

shape of brandy or gin.

The strangest medley of persons that can well be imagined were assembled in Whitecross-street during the time of my compulsory stay there; captains in the army and navy, Wesleyan ministers, betting sharps, small tradesmen, innocents like myself, who had put their name to a bill merely to oblige a friend; in short, representatives of the whole population. One man, I remember, had been farming in New Zealand five years, but coming back to England to make some purchases, was arrested for an old debt; another had paid his passage for himself and wife to Australia, but had been nailed just before sailing, and carried off from his family. All, however, seemed to look on the Insolvent Court as the safety valve, moved thereunto probably by the fry of small attorneys, who used to prowl about the wards each morning, and fleece the poor victims of what they could. They did not, however, always get off with impunity; one, I remember, had swindled a man out of eleven pounds, under the pretext of getting him out of limbo, but had only fed him with promises. At length, the ominous cry of "Rat! rat!" was raised one bitterly cold afternoon, and the whole hive was roused to action. The unfortunate man was dragged under the pump; some pumped on him, others whitewashed him, while a greater portion amused themselves with pelting him with snowballs. He was at length rescued with great difficulty by the turnkeys, who, perhaps from a kindred feeling, did not interfere till the last moment, and then the poor devil had hardly a whole rag on his back.

Next to fraudulent attorneys and bailiffs, the debtors seemed to entertain the greatest abhorrence for those men who would not pay their footing. I do not mean those persons who really could not find the pound, for in such cases all were willing even to subscribe to make up the money for him, or to give him time; but those who, while possessing means, declined paying. For them there was no mercy; every man's hand was raised against them; if they contrived to cook a bit of meat with great difficulty, somebody or other would be seen to spoil it for them; if they boiled a cup of coffee, it was certain to be upset. At

night they would be dragged out of bed and tossed in blankets, or their clothes would mysteriously disappear. They were, after a few days, only too glad to compound by paying the money and living thenceforth

in peace.

It happened that Christmas-day occurred during my stay in Whitecross-street, and I had a famous opportunity of witnessing prison saturnalia. The sheriffs liberally provided beef and bread, potatoes and beer, for the wards, but, by some mismanagement, the meat we obtained was of very poor quality. A deputation was consequently sent to the governor, who, with his usual courtesy, readily listened to the complaint, and promised amendment. Indeed, this gentleman earned golden opinions from all ranks of men by the rare faculty he seemed to possess of pleasing all while offending none, and even the most desperate would be checked by a quiet remonstrance from him. Many a poor debtor has to thank him for release from a hopeless period of incarceration, for he is ever ready to help the really deserving man and procure him assistance from the several societies that make debtors their care. A "monster" piece of beef might be seen roasting at the fire on this festive occasion, carefully attended to by the hungrier of the prisoners, who seldom had an opportunity of regaling themselves at so cheap a rate. After all the visitors had been ushered out, dinner was put upon the table, and a merry set commenced operations on the sheriffs' present. The more select portion of the community had their dinner apart at the stewards' table, which was amply provided with turkeys, geese, &c., nor was there wanting abundance of wine. After all had tired their jaws sufficiently, singing was the order of the evening, kept up in a very free and easy style, till the turnkeys summoned all to bed, which, however, was deferred for an hour, in honour of the occasion.

In fact, singing was the staple amusement of all the prisoners, and to encourage it, the three wards invited each by turn to evening harmonics; and any man who could sing, would bitterly repent giving way to his vanity by indulging the company with a stave, for he would know no peace as long as he remained in the prison. Night even would not be considered a season of rest, for on reaching the dormitories he would probably again be called upon to sing his comrades to sleep, nor would any excuses prevail. One poor fellow, I remember, in an unguarded hour, gave us the scena, "All is lost now," out of the "Snammbla," as it was popularly termed, and from that hour he knew no peace. The usual style of singing was not, however, in this severely classical taste: comic ditties were decidedly the favourites, and the broader they were the better, were it only for the sake of seeing the woe-begone countenances of the unfortunate Independent ministers, who were compelled to

sit and listen to them.

In truth, there was a constant craving after boisterous hilarity, as if all wished to forget their sorrow; and as a natural consequence, practical jokes were much admired. Among them none was so successful as to write letters in the name of unoffending parties to the most hot-tempered fellows, threatening to punch their heads for some fancied insult, and then artfully feed the flame till a very pretty quarrel would ensue. The tables would be turned now and then, and the belligerents join cause to

punish the victimiser, for whom no one felt any mercy, as he had tried

his tricks on nearly every one in succession.

Still in spite of all the amusements which served to keep the old enemy at defiance, he at length began to hang heavy on my hands, and after three weeks I summoned Mr. Abednego Amos to a conference, which took place with the grating between us, for nothing would persuade him to enter the prison and run the risk of Lynch law. I could not, however, come to any terms with him; all my threats of going through the Insolvent Court were of no avail, and I was at length driven to write a penitent, and, I think, very proper letter to my father. For three days I heard nothing of him, and was beginning to turn misanthropical and let my beard grow, when, oh, joy! I heard myself summoned to the gate. There I beheld my mother and my beloved Jemima, whom I had long vowed to call my own.

The sequel of my history may be confined to a few lines. The governor consented to liberate me on the condition of my marrying my darling Jemima, forswearing billiards, and registering a vow never again to put my name to a bill. All this I readily agreed to; Mr. Amos's demand settled, and myself soon at liberty to walk the streets of London without any apprehension of being tapped on the shoulder by any minion of the law. On leaving the place that had been my home for so long, I left the remainder of my mother's ten-pound note, to be expended in beer by my fellow-prisoners, for which they returned me sincere thanks by

shouting most tremendously.

In conclusion, I may say that I owe much to my visit to Whitecross-street. Before I went there I thought it fast to run in debt and spend money foolishly; but I received a lesson which has proved most beneficial to me. For instance, when my dear little wife stops in Regent-street, and looks with an envious eye on some duck of a shawl, I can immediately calm her by calling to her memory how I visited Whitecross-street. And if ever it be my good fortune, as my friends confidently expect, to take a seat on the judicial bench, my first care will be to introduce a bill into the House for the improvement of our English law of debt.

Liberavi animum meum. In the interim, let the younger of my readers profit by the lesson I have read them. Let them eschew all acquaintances picked up in billiard-rooms and night-houses; above all, forget how to write when a bill is brought before their eyes. By such conduct it may be their good fortune to pass through life pleasantly, and make no closer acquaintance than through these pages with the interior

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diese Develop in mer half delet rice vendel et genel.
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of a prison.

THE RETREAT FROM RUSSIA. By Nicholas Michell,

AUTHOR OF "SPIRITS OF THE PAST," &c.

There's merriment in Moscow's ancient halls,
And madly drink, carouse the victor Gauls:
Ho! this is glory; what to them the woe
Of men unhomed, the million tears that flow?
But hark! the sound of fire—loud voices shout;
Like snakes of vengeance, red-tongued flames break out,
Wreath tower and dome, and course from street to street;
Ye hear the hiss, the rush of flying feet;
The smoke by day blots out the sun, by night
Ye need no moon, so strong that ghastly light.
O'er works of art, o'er treasures none may save,
Sweeps, like a surging sea, the fiery wave;
Destruction revel holds, and grisly Fear
Mutters her charm, and shakes her hell-locks here.

The scene hath changed; no flames we now behold, But wide, wide plains, where broods the demon Cold; His spells have turned the rill, the lake to stone, One robe of white o'er dull creation thrown. The heavens are black; no verdure cheers the eye, And gales, like sharpened swords, sweep freezing by. Checked in its course, the heart-blood wanders weak, The tear that starts hangs frozen on the cheek. See! what gaunt men are dragging, feebly-slow, Their wasted limbs through drifting waves of snow, Pale skeletons, just animated Deaths, Life faintly spoken by their white-drawn breaths. In scattered groups those soldiers totter on,
Resolve, and discipline, and spirit gone,
With faces tow'rd their home, though never there Their feet shall bear them, whispers grim despair. Starvation added to their dire distress, Each looks at each—incarnate Wretchedness! Horses are slaughtered, Nature's wants to meet, Belts, shoes are gnawed—they march with naked feet; Frozen the lip, the lean hand weak and numb, Mute is the fife, and hushed the once deep drum; Arms are cast useless down, for men no more Can point the tube, or bid the cannon roar; So faint, a stone, a breeze to earth can throw The late strong warrior, soon engulfed in snow; Powerless he lies, while stupor, strange and deep, All feeling fled, foreruns eternal sleep.

Hovering in clouds, and cutting stragglers off,
Sweeping like whirlwinds, murdering with a scoff,
Their hardy steeds the fiery Cossacks wheel,
Driving in men half dead the vengeful steel.
But, ah! a sight more piteous, full of fear,
Behold that suffering army's tortured rear!
There banners, guns, and all war's grand array,
In wild confusion, strew the desert way:
Those who can march no more, sit down to die,
And breathe to pitiless winds the fruitless sigh;
The sinking ranks to countless thousands grow,
With none to help, and none to sooth their woe:
There beasts of prey, fierce howling, gather round,

Tearing their snow-tombed victims from the ground; And carrion-birds flap slow the heavy wing, As loath to leave their joyous banqueting; All, all is there we shrink to name or see, That wrings the heart, and shocks humanity.

Apart a veteran leant, proud Valour's son-Who many a noble deed in fight had done, Long followed Gorgon war, and him whose name Had shaken earth, and filled it with its fame-Now sinking, dying, on his bed of snow. Uncheered by victory's shout-without a blow-Sad, humbling seemed his fate, and crushed him more Than all the pangs his tortured body bore. And had he worshipped glory's star for this? Fame might be others' meed, but woe was his; Yet o'er that anguish burst the soldier's pride, And Vive l'Emp'reur! the veteran faintly cried, Owned at that hour the strong, enchaining spell Napoleon cast 'round prostrate hearts so well. But as cold death drew nearer, glory's light Faded like baseless dreams that mock the night: Another vision wrapp'd his saddened mind, As low on shivering hands his head reclined; His eye closed slowly, but the eye of soul, And fancy brightened, spite of death's control.

Far from that wintry plain he seemed to fly, Above him arched a glowing Autumn sky; His native Rhône with murmurs soothed his ear, He trod the haunts to miser memory dear; The jocund song of happy vintage hours Rang from the purple hills and bloomy bowers; Delicious warmth made Eden of the earth, That hymned for gratitude, and laughed for mirth. Before his cot with Provence roses gay, Bent at her wheel the wife of youth's fond day: While joyful near, beneath the olive shade, His daughters danced, and village children played. There stood his Maude with love-enkindled eye, Praised him and blessed, but turned to check a sigh; His hopeful children, gathering round to cheer, Laughed off misgivings, kissed away her tear, Till smiles, at thoughts of meeting, seemed to break, Like beams on banks of roses, o'er her cheek.

Oh, Fancy! charm him yet, keep back truth's night, Pour on crushed Misery's heart ideal light! Chase, chase the dread reality, and give One gleam of rapture while he yet may live!

The spell dissolves; his glazed eye wanders 'round; Where is the Rhône? where each sweet sight and sound; Cold, hunger, snow, are all he feels and sees, While Death's pale angel moans in every breeze. Ah! Peace, how lovely now her form appears! How hideous War! grim lord of pains and tears! He curses, all too late, the fiend that brings Hell's gloom and woe to mar earth's loveliest things; Deems worse than crime Ambition's march, that lies To power and fame through human agonies; Blesses the home his eye shall ne'er survey, Sinks on the waste, and groans his soul away.

THE QUEEN'S LETTER.

AN EPISODE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

V.

THE young girl who had appeared so suddenly at the moment when the Unknown was about to confide a portion of her secret to the workman, seemed to be about twenty years of age, and wore the dress of the grisettes of that day. Without being actually pretty, she possessed the charm of youth, and a certain vivacity of expression which revealed the energy of a devoted nature. Her hair drawn up into a knot, was not powdered, and a shawl of blue silk fastened over the chest was substituted for the handkerchief which the little bourgeoises had a peculiar predilection for. As our readers already know, her name was Lucie, she was an orphan, and supported herself by her labour. In the quarter where she resided she was considered to lead a very regular life, and, in fact, her connexion with Emile was not of a nature to compromise her reputation, for he also lived by his labour, and a marriage between them would be considered the most natural thing in the world. Lucie had, therefore, followed her passion more than her interest, in hazarding the step she had just taken; for it is probable her neighbours would have changed their opinion about her, had they seen her pale agitated face, fixing two gleaming eyes on the rival, whose features the darkness prevented her from distinguishing. In the temper she was in, she was the first, as we may easily imagine, to take advantage of the light. had scarce perceived the regular and calm features of the Unknown, before her countenance changed its expression; she hurriedly quitted the attitude she had assumed, and recoiling, cried with an air of profound astonishment mingled with a lingering feeling of jealousy and a sentiment of involuntary respect,

"You here-you, madame!"

The Unknown also rose, drew close to the workwoman, and said to her, in a tone so low that Emile, who was leaning on the mantelpiece could not hear it,

"Silence, little one;—not a word more, mademoiselle!" she continued, in a louder key; "you wished to see me, and you now do so. Do you

still believe I am your rival?"

And as if not doubting the answer Lucie would give to her question, the Unknown went toward the window, looked out into the street a second time, and hurriedly returning to the middle of the room, said,

"Time is slipping away; something must be done, and my mission accomplished. Withdraw into that room, mademoiselle," and she pointed to the glass compartment of which we have already spoken.

With a docility the workman admired without understanding, Lucie bowed her head in sign of assent, and walked backwards toward the bed-

room.

"You know this lady, then?" Emile asked her, whom this sudden recognition between two females, who were, as he thought, complete strangers to one another, had thrown again into a state of perplexity.

" Mademoiselle Lucie comes sometimes to work at my mistress's," the

Unknown said, for she evidently wished to spare the girl the embarrassment of a falsehood, or the danger of truth; "it is not at all surprising, therefore, that we are acquainted."

Lucie made a second sign of assent, and disappeared behind the partition, while the Unknown again drew from her bosom the letter Emile

had seen before.

"Time presses," she then said to the workman; "it does not give me an opportunity of making a fresh appeal to your honour; the service you have it in your power to render me is immense, and if you will do so, you will gain my eternal gratitude in return. I will not add a word more; will you carry to its address the letter I hold in my hand, and can I count on your celerity, your prudence, and your discretion?"

The Unknown pronounced these last words in a sobbing tone, for she had noticed with terror the hesitation and unwillingness depicted on the

workman's features.

"Let me see the letter," he said, however, as he held out his hand, in which the Unknown laid a note carefully sealed, and exhaling one of those vague perfumes which in our day betray feminine, and in 1792, smelt in sans culotte nostrils like counter-revolutionary correspondence.

The workman noticed this while turning his eyes on the address, and had scarcely read the name written on the envelope, before he exclaimed,

without any attempt to lower his voice,

"Monsieur Grandet—this letter is for him! but M. Grandet is a member of the Assembly, madame; a Girondist, a man suspected of moderatism, a man who more than once has been assailed by the seductions of the court—and you wish me to carry a letter from yourself to this man? And who will assure me that this letter with which you entrust me does not stand in connexion with some liberticide project? Who will say that in fulfilling your pleasure, I am not blindly serving some culpable scheme? No, no, madame, do not reckon on me, I will not be the bearer of your letter; and all I can do is to return it to you, and promise not to speak about it."

The workman walked hurriedly up and down the room, while the Unknown followed him in her despair, with her hands clasped, and her eyes filled with tears, as if she wished to disarm by entreaties the anger which

ruined all her hopes.

An apparently very simple incident helped to increase her terror. The candle, which till then had continued alight on the mantelpiece, suddenly went out. At the same time the young woman fancied she noticed a foreign substance rustle her dress, and felt a breath upon her face.

"There is some one in the room!" she cried, in despair. "My God!

the secret is no longer mine!"

"There is no one here but Lucie, you, and myself," the young workman said, not at all understanding this explosion of sudden fear; "and you must not be so timid, because the wind that comes through an open window has put the candle out; besides, if there is any one here, we shall soon find him; for I do not fancy that a man, whether a thief or a spy, would risk jumping from the fifth story into the street. As to the door, I defy it to be opened without our hearing the noise of a key or picklock."

After he had relit the candle, the workman made a careful search in every corner of the room, without finding any one. Lucie had not stirred, but remained seated in the bedroom, which, until new orders, served as her prison.

"You see, madame, that it was only the wind played us a trick, and

you do wrong to believe in magic, spying, or treachery."

Contrary to appearances and Emile's assertions, the young woman was, however, quite right in attributing the incident we have just related to the intervention of some person unseen. This person was no other than Panotet: it was he who played the part of Æolus in blowing out the candle—it was he who, in passing, had ruffled the Unknown's dress—in short, it was he who had in his flight raised the current of air she had felt. But what had become of him? How had he disappeared? This requires some explanation; and, in the first place, how had he got in?

We left Panotet in the dark, fully determined on keeping obstinate watch till the moment when chance gave him an opportunity for action. On hearing Lucie's step on the stairs he had retired to the furthest extremity of the landing, for fear of being caught in the act by some inhabitant of the house; during the preliminary observations, the gamin had drawn close to her, and, finally, when the young girl opened the door by means of a false key, he slunk in after her with the agility of a snake, and hid himself behind a screen which masked the hearth.

Panotet had thus heard all that had been said, and, at the moment when the workman was putting his suspicions into shape, and explaining his reasons for refusal, Panotet, for his part, confined in his den, was

carrying on the following conversation with himself:

"Well, then, now I know enough. There's a letter to be delivered; and this letter is addressed to Grandet, member of the National Assembly. There's something up. Emile is a spark, who will catch fire presently; and the other party's tongue is so well hung that he will soon nibble. I must be off then as quick as possible, get before him, and go and tell the man who is waiting for me at the Marché St.

Honoré. Off we go then! and the aristocrats are sold!"

Be off; that was easy to say, but how to manage it; if he went out by the door that exposed him to the risk of going down five staircases on his head, which did not at all suit Panotet, who, up to the present, had only practised walking on his hands. Spite of the difficulty of the situation, Panotet's inventive genius was not long in fault. While examining the front of the house inhabited by the workman, he had noticed one of those knotted cords, which plasterers use, fastened to the roof and reaching nearly to the ground. At the moment this circumstance occurred to him, and he made up his mind. He passed his head gently between the screen and the side of the chimney, raised himself up, while the workman and his companion had their backs turned to him, blew out the candle, crossed the room, mounted the window-sill, hung like a squirrel on the rope, which oscillated beneath his weight, descended, knot by knot, to the fourth floor, crept in at a window looking on the stairs, cleared a hundred steps without turning his head, then found himself in the street, repeating, as he ran at full speed toward the Marché St. Honoré, "Oh, the aristocrats are sold!" All this was the work of an instant for Panotet; he belonged to that generation which at a later date crossed the Alps, and poured like a torrent over Italy from the summit of the Apennines; he was one of those revolutionary monkeys whom Napoleon afterwards converted into heroes. Certainly, at this moment, Panotet had a right to be proud, not only of his courage and his physical address, but also of the justice of his judgment and the force of his deductions. The hypotheses he had raised on the workman's weakness were soon realised after his departure. When Emile saw the young woman's eye resting upon him with an expression of sorrowful disappointment and almost of reproach—when he saw the tears, she had till now restrained, filling her eyes and coursing down her cheek—when, in fine, she pronounced these words in an accent which the memory can recal but the tongue cannot repeat:

"Then you abandon me, sir!"

Oh, then, the workman—spite of the ardour of his patriotism, spite of his instinctive hatred of all that breathed of aristocracy, and all that in his mind was connected with anti-popular projects—the workman, we say, felt himself touched to the heart, and he had need to summon up all

his fortitude to be able to say with any degree of firmness:

"I do not abandon you, madame, and I am still ready to defend you; but the service you require of me is a doubtful one. You wish to make me your agent in a deed I do not know, but which I suspect is contrary to my principles. You tempt my conscience, you request me to give up my principles; but that I cannot do. You serve the court, I the nation. I do not hold you in the wrong for doing your duty, and therefore consider it right that I do mine."

While Emile was speaking, the Unknown had dried her tears and

assumed an air of proud serenity.

"Give me the letter," she said, holding out her hand to the carpenter.

"And what will you do?"

"Go," she replied, - "go; whatever danger awaits me, even if I were

to be massacred by the mob."

"But reflect that, in exposing your person to danger, you also risk your secret. What would happen, if they were to tear from you the mysterious letter you ask me for with so much eagerness?"

"It shall not be torn from me as long as I have life!" the Unknown said, with exaltation. "If I am stopped, I will swallow it—and let them

kill me afterwards, I care not!"

The workman, involuntarily, perhaps, drew back the hand the Unknown

wished to seize.

"Assure me," he said, after a pause, "that the step you would take yourself on my refusal does not cover any evil design, and I am at your service."

"I give you my assurance, I promise it—I swear it. Oh! thanks, thanks!"

The Unknown stopped speaking, as if to calm her emotion. She then

continued, emphasising each syllable:

"Before going, listen carefully to my last recommendations, and do not forget a word of what I am about to say to you. When you have delivered the letter I entrust to you, go towards the Champ de Mars, cross it and follow an allée, bordered with lime-trees, close to the banks

of the Seine. At the end of the allée you will see a small white house, half hidden behind a clump of trees. When you are in front of the house, place yourself beneath the middle window, and strike your hands together three times; a door will open, you will enter, and hear the voice of a female. This person will, no doubt, be terrified at seeing you, and try to escape; reassure her respectfully, and when you have induced her to listen to you, say to her: 'I come from Marie.' She will ask you for a proof; you will then answer, and bear in mind the sound of the foreign words I am going to pronounce-answer her: 'Bis in den Tod.' Do you hear-'Bis in den Tod;' that means-'To death!' Then the person to whom I send you will listen to you without suspicion. You can tell her the result of your visit, and if the person she expects will You will also add, to appease her disquietude, that an unfortunate fatality had alone prevented me from flying to her; but that I am in no danger, and am always devoted to her. You understand— 'Bis in den Tod.'"

The young woman was silent. The workman made no objection, required nothing to be repeated; he had retained every word, even the German motto, such power had the accents of the woman addressing him already gained over his heart. When he had closed the door after him, the young woman gave way to her joy, without even thinking of Lucie's

presence.

"Thanks, thanks, excellent young man!" she exclaimed with exaltation, and her eyes raised to Heaven. "He will not betray me, I am confident! all that is young is good; a traitor at twenty-five years of age never existed!" In spite of the assurances the young woman gave herself, her joy was not of long duration; a moment of silence marked the change which had taken place in her, and she continued: "But she—she who is waiting for me—will she be satisfied with the explanations my messenger gives her? or will she consent to receive the deputy Grandet alone, by night, in an isolated house? Oh! I must go and join her! My God! help me! bid your thunders peal, your rain disperse the mob, and ensure my flight!"

The young woman let her head fall disconsolately on her bosom, then raised it slowly, and looked around her as if seeking that support of which she felt the want. At this moment Lucie, who had heard the closing words of this monologue, left the bedroom, and, standing respect-

fully at some distance from the Unknown, said to her:

"Madame, have you any need of my assistance?"

"Yes, you can be of service to me," she replied, quickly; "come with

me—one woman is suspected, two together are not; come, come."

The determination to which the young female had come, for want of a better, was not free from danger; but Heaven, whose intervention she had so repeatedly invoked, now came to her aid. A furious peal of thunder drowned her voice, and shook the little table and few chairs composing the workman's stock of furniture. At the same time, a mist, impregnated with humidity, filled the room, and announced the approach of a storm.

"It rains—it rains!" the Unknown said, hurrying to the window to enjoy the spectacle she had so impatiently desired.

The storm had its usual effect. The crowd that blocked up the street

was dispersed in an instant, and soon there only remained on the shining pavement one or two of Panotet's confrères, who braved the thunder, and laughingly regarding the cataracts the sky was pouring out above their heads.

"Saved!" the Unknown said, clasping her hands in token of grati-

tude.

"And you will go out in such weather?" Lucie asked.

"And you will come with me—you will accompany me to the first coach we meet. Be calm, little one; and if you get wet through for me, in exchange I promise to interest myself in your marriage—service for service—only keep my secret. If M. Emile ask you who I am, tell him I am a poor woman in the service of an illustrious lady, and that my

name is Marie, do you understand?"

The Unknown passed her arm beneath Lucie's, who could not restrain from blushing, as if she considered herself unworthy such an honour; and the two young women descended the staircase side by side. When they reached the street, they walked at a rapid pace without caring for the rain which beat on their shoulders and tore the lace on their caps. After walking thus about two hundred yards, they noticed a fiacre which was returning empty to the stand. The Unknown threw herself into it, waved her hand in adieu to Lucie, and ordered the coachman to drive her to the Champ de Mars. Through prudential motives, doubtlessly, she did not wish him to take her nearer her destination.

VI.

It was night when she arrived in front of the small house she had indicated to Emile, after crossing the Champ de Mars, and walking some time by the banks of the river. The thunder was still growling and the rain continued to fall sharply. The young woman who had so courageously completed so painful a journey, stopped in front of the centre window of the small house; and after looking round her to assure herself that no one saw her, she clapped her hands three times, murmuring, as she did so, in a low voice, the first lines of a German song, which, however, was not at all suited to circumstances, for it commenced thus:

"The swallow returns, the sky is blue, the harvest is yellow; let us re-

joice."

The answer to this mysterious appeal was not long delayed; the door opened discreetly, and a female welcomed the singer at the foot of the staircase, by saying to her in a faltering tone:

"Ah, it is you—it is you, Marie! at last!"

Had the darkness not prevented the features of her who thus spoke from being distinguished, it would have been easy to come to the decision that she was as youthful and beautiful as the Unknown, though the style of her beauty differed slightly. Her figure was, perhaps, somewhat less flexible, but it was taller and more majestic; her eyes were of a tender hazel, whose expression offered that happy mixture of pride and gentleness which suits the face of queens so well. Her straight and fault-lessly chiselled nose recalled the type of perfection which the Germans attribute exclusively to the daughters of their kaisers; her mouth [was rather large, but well cut, and ornamented with a double row of teeth,

whose whiteness deserved to become proverbial; her hair, covered with white powder, according to the fashion adopted by the ladies of the court of Louis XVI., described around her forehead an harmonious line, and brought out that blue tinge of the temples so dear to painters. Her toilette was simple, but tasteful; it was composed of a dress of black silk, richly ornamented and cut so low as to display the commencement of the swan-like neck, and even the curve of two shoulders, slightly too plump, but whose shape left nothing to be desired. Beside being beautiful, the lady of whom we speak possessed in the highest degree that peculiar charm which poets alone understand. Either through ennui at the present, or care for the future, melancholy ever cast its shadow over her lovely features; it might have been said that a menacing phantom continually rose before her dreamy eyes, and that on her too pallid lips one of those vague murmurs ever floated, which come from the heart, and which the unfortunate regard as the voice of presentiment.

This female was then called Queen of France! History has since named

her Marie Antoinette!

The queen had taken the hand of the Unknown, as we hitherto called her, but whom we shall now know as the Princesse L-, for the

veil must henceforth be drawn away.

After crossing a dark room, the queen introduced her companion into a second one, equally dark and nearly unfurnished; here she stopped, and drawing the princess to her side on a sofa, which comprised nearly the

whole of the furniture:

"Marie," she said to her, "why did you not come sooner; oh, if you knew how frightful darkness and solitude are? if you knew what fancies seize upon the mind when we are alone and anxiously waiting? I never understood until to-night what poor people must suffer in prison. I fancied that you could not come; that you were arrested, or even dead! I was mad, but I am very happy now; for I feel you are near me, I can embrace you, my good, darling Marie! What a state you are in, though?" she added, as she clung to the princess, and felt her cheeks still wet with the rain; "and it is for me that you have thus exposed yourself. You must love me sincerely."

"Has your majesty a right to ask me such a question? Must I re-

mind you of my motto-'Bis in den Tod.'"

"To death; you love me till death," the queen continued, with a melancholy smile. "Oh, thanks, it is so sweet, and yet so rare, to feel oneself beloved. But why do you call me your majesty? In the presence of the court, when all eyes are fixed on us, when all listen to us, oh, then I am the queen; but when I am alone with you, call me Marie, as I call you; for see, it seems to me that, when we are dead, faithful hearts will unite the queen and the subject in the same reminiscence, and call us the two Maries."

"I would remind your majesty," said the princess, "that I have to

speak with you on a serious subject."

"I know it," the queen answered, with an indefinable emotion in her tone, "I know it, and would forget it. You had scarce quitted me, bearing with you that fatal letter, the remembrance of which terrifies and tortures me, before I wished to call you back, take from you the letter, and wait with resignation for Heaven's decision. I, the persecuted,

calumniated, accursed queen, I write an autograph letter to a man I do not know, and who, perhaps, is one of my personal enemies. I demand an interview with this man, hope I may soften his heart, and bind him to a cause which counts so few devoted partisans. It is more than imprudence—it is folly. Were the king to know it! An instant before your return, I wished to fly hence, to escape the necessity of this interview, which I yet solicited myself, and now I have scarce courage to ask you—Have you seen the man I wished to receive? have you spoken to him? will he come?"

"I do not know," said the princess; "but, hark!"

The signal agreed on between the princess and the workman was at that moment heard.

"It is he already," said the queen, in terror, as she shrunk back on the sofa.

"Not yet," said the princess, as she rose; "but if your majesty will not

be alarmed, and leave me to act, all will be well."

The princess descended the staircase, hiding as much as possible the noise of her footsteps. When she had recognised her messenger through the keyhole, she opened the door gently, and placing herself on the lowest step of the staircase, while the workman remained standing on the narrow square which formed the porch.

"Well!" she asked quickly.
"I have seen him," Emile said.

"Was he alone?"

"Yes."

"You gave him the letter?"

"Yes."

"Will he come?"

"Yes."
"When?"

"In a quarter of an hour at the furthest."

"Thank you, and farewell," said the princess; "I trust you will not be angry at my expressing my gratitude so briefly."

In spite of the congé that had been given him, the workman did not

stir. He had evidently something more to say.

"Thank you, and adieu, sir," the princess repeated, mounting a step

higher.

"Do not leave me yet," said the workman, hurriedly, more like a man seeking to give himself courage than displaying it. "I have rendered you a signal service, and I wish, I desire to be recompensed for it."

"And how?" said the princess, who had already reached the fourth

step.

"Promise me that I shall see you again."

These last words were uttered by the workman in an accent so profound, so full of desire and apprehension at the same time, that the princess felt herself tremble, and bounded up the stairs.

"Ah, I was wrong!" said Emile, swallowing a murmur of disap-

pointment.

"I promise you we shall meet again," the princess replied from the top of the stairs; "but leave this house as quickly as possible, your presence might injure me."

With these words the princess entered the room again, but not until she heard the workman close the door after him.

The queen was resting her head moodily on her bosom, and her halfclosed eyes evinced the species of stupor in which she was plunged.

"He will come," the princess said, on entering. "In Heaven's name, madame," she added, turning an assuring look on her sovereign, "summon up courage, and reflect that the step you are about to take may prevent grievous misfortunes. Paris is not tranquil, madame; I saw to-night, in crossing the Rue St. Honoré, a restless and discontented mob. I heard murmurs, even menaces; something sinister is brooding for to-morrow, and I fear lest the 20th June may be a fatal date to royalty. Once again take courage. To free the people from the deception which is practised upon it, we require an eloquent tongue, a man who through his talents, his character, his name, has acquired an influence over his colleagues in the assembly and the agitators without. Well, then! this man is coming! Dare to speak to him—dare to tell him that the king reckons upon him; that you leave your fate in his hands; and remember, madame, that even were you not a queen, your words would possess that supreme authority

bestowed by beauty, youth, and grace."

Marie Antoinette was in truth as proud of her beauty as any little bourgeoise could be; and she consequently greeted with a smile this homage, which reminded her of the enthusiastic love the Parisians had evinced towards her in better times. Besides the reasons alleged by the princess were not without their weight. Though royalty was notably discredited and darkly menaced, it might still be restored to its proper dignity, and the man the queen was about to receive had it in his power to do what Barnave attempted to do at another date. This man, to whom we will continue to give the name of Grandet, was one of the most eloquent orators belonging to the Girondist party, and up to the present he had ever publicly declared his respect for the king and royal family; the most ardent of his friends even reproached his weakness in this respect, and at the Jacobins' club a demagogue said he was an aristocrat spoilt in the baking.

"Well," said the queen, as she rose, "you wish it, Marie; I will receive this M. Grandet, and if he possess any delicacy, any pity in his

heart, I will touch it by teaching him what a queen can suffer."

The queen had scarcely announced her resolution, when a slight sound was heard beneath the windows of the house.

"It is the signal," said the princess, lighting a little lamp placed on the chimney. "Madame," she added, as she drew nearer the queen, "the damp has disarranged your hair: allow me to put this lock in its

place." "Leave me, Marie," the queen said, falling back a step, and with that expression of disdainful pity which was natural to her; "do you not deem me sufficiently handsome to receive one of my subjects? You wish me to degrade myself by coquetry. Never! Marie, never! better suffer than blush. Now, go," she continued, after a moment's silence, "I am ready."

The queen took the lamp, pushed a door open which communicated with another room, and did not close it till she saw the princess proceed-

ing toward the staircase.

The latter soon found herself in the presence of a man who, like the workman, had announced his arrival by clapping his hands thrice.

"Are you M. Grandet?"
"Yes," said the man.

"You received the letter?"

" Yes."

" Have the kindness to follow me."

The new comer displayed a momentary hesitation, while placing his foot on the first step; but in proportion as he advanced, his hesitation was converted into assurance.

"Have you no light?" he inquired of the princess.

"Only in the room where the queen is awaiting you," said the latter.

"Ah!" remarked the man; but immediately strove to smother the exclamation, the sense of which it would have been difficult to conjecture. "Do you know," he added, good-humouredly, "that you are not acting very prudently? Who assures you that I am really the man the queen expects?"

The princess could not restrain a movement of terror at the idea of such a supposition, and she turned sharply towards the person who had suggested it, forgetting that the darkness would not permit her to see

his features.

"Pray go on, madame, I am following you," the latter said, with the greatest coolness.

This sang froid reassured the princess, who regained her own.

"How could you be any one but M. Grandet? Did not the workman who delivered the queen's letter to you, inform me of your speedy arrival? Did you not give the required signal? Besides, even if I had brought a light, my security would not have been greater, for neither the queen nor myself have ever seen M. Grandet."

"Ah!" remarked the stranger again, following the princess into the

dark room, preceding the one into which the queen had retired.

"I will inform the queen that you are at her command."

"Quite so; but be kind enough to beg her majesty to pardon me for daring to appear in her presence in a very unsuitable dress; the man who brought me the letter, found me in a state of ill-health, and I have

come in my usual costume."

"Her majesty bids me tell you," said the princess, on her return from speaking to the queen, "that a representative of the nation is ever welcome, whatever be the dress he may wear; and that, besides, in accepting her invitation in spite of your suffering condition, you give a proof of your zeal for which she feels most grateful."

"Bid him enter," said the queen at the same instant, in a somewhat softer key than she was in the habit of using at Versailles and the Tuileries, in addressing the groom of the chamber or the ladies-in-waiting.

The important personage whose pity the queen wished to invoke, as she herself said, passed the princess, and bowed deeply before Marie Antoinette, who, on his entry, half rose from the fauteuil on which she was seated.

"Before commencing the explanation your majesty doubtless wishes to have with me," he said, in a hoarse tone, and apparently striving to hide the true inflexion of his voice, "I must beg you to authorise me to take a precaution which will appear to you as indispensable as it does to me."

While speaking thus, he closed the door behind him, and bolted it, and then turning toward the queen, who had not been able to repress a

gesture of surprise and disquietude, he continued:

"The step I am taking at this moment is as perilous to me as it is to your majesty. I must beg your majesty to remark this, which perhaps justifies the want of respect of which I have rendered myself culpable. If the queen risk her reputation in receiving me, I also hazard mine in complying with the invitation she so graciously sent me. If her majesty has enemies ever ready to put a false construction on her most innocent actions, I too have zealous friends and vigilant colleagues, who have a right to ask me for an account of my resolutions, my acts, and my whole life."

These words, pronounced with the emphatic accent of a comedian who is playing a part, had only partially restored the queen to her serenity, and the sight of the person who uttered them was but little adapted to This man, thanks to the truly singular costume he correct their effect. wore, appeared by the feeble light of the lamp, which only partially illumined the apartment, more to resemble a compact and shapeless shadow than a human silhouette regularly formed. He wore a great-coat of a dark hue, descending nearly to his heels, and the collar of which, raised above his ears, cast an impenetrable shade over his cheeks; as for his forehead, temples, and even eyebrows, they were entirely buried beneath the peak of a cap provided with two flaps, which were fastened beneath his chin by a silken cord. Through this strange disguise, his eyes were alone exposed, and their glare, in the midst of the surrounding darkness, had something sinister about it. The queen herself, spite of her firm will not to betray any weakness, could not endure the regard of these two little and glittering eyes which appeared literally to pierce through her. She, therefore, turned her head away involuntarily, when the man, who still remained standing before her with a show of respect, said to her in a grave tone,

"And now, if your majesty will kindly explain the purpose of our in-

terview. I am all attention."

The queen maintained silence for some little space, either because she wished to recover herself before commencing the solemn explanation she had herself desired, or because, superstitious as she was, she could not guard against a vague and mysterious terror. Her visitor profited by this pause to examine with minute attention the rare peculiarities of the the room in which he found himself. This apartment, as was attested by the sculptured compartments of the ceiling and the design represented in inlaid work on the floor, had once been the salon of what was formerly called a petite maison; but the dust encrusted on the sashes of the curtainless windows and the panelling of the walls showed that the room had been long uninhabited, and was looked upon as a temporary resting-place. Two fauteuils, one occupied by the queen, the other, whose purpose it was easy to imagine, formed a very good representation of two tents raised in the morning for a pic-nic, and removed at night.

"Be seated, sir," the queen said, directing the enigmatical personage,

whose exterior we have described, to the other fauteuil.

And collecting all her courage, she spoke thus in a firm voice, and with an accent in which the influence of the Teutonic tongue had not at all affected the truly Parisian lisp.

This specient that he stored the door beleful him, and belief it,

FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss Julia Addison,

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

CHAPTER LI.

All hail, ye tender feelings dear!

The smile of love, the friendly tear,

The sympathetic glow.

Burns.

In the meantime, the horseman had reached the house, dismounted, and was inquiring eagerly of the servant who answered his impatient ring at the door-bell, whether Mr. Pemberton was in the house. Being answered in the affirmative, he produced his card, and begged the servant to say that Captain Wentworth wished to speak with him.

"Mr. Pemberton is alone in the drawing-room, sir," replied the ser-

vant. "Will you please to walk up at once?"

Wentworth, or rather Lord Percival, for we may as well in future call our hero by his right name, had, on arriving in England, gone at once to Lord Swellington's, where he expected to find Pemberton, being in a perfect fever of suspense and anxiety at having received no letter from him. He could not summon courage to go to Lady Seagrove's, or to attempt to see Florence until he was well assured that all was right in that quarter. The Swellington family were from home, but a servant informed Percival that Mr. Pemberton had been staying with Lady Seagrove's family at their seat in Northumberland, but was now, he believed, on a visit to a gentleman of the name of Harley, at Harley Court, near C——, in Scotland, at least he had observed that address on a letter directed to him by his master about two days ago.

"Lady Seagrove's family in Northumberland?" repeated Percival,

aloud.

"Yes, sir," replied the servant, who was unusually condescending and communicative for the domestic of a great man. "I believe they went principally on account of Miss, Hamilton's health. Sir Robert Craven accompanied them, and, as I heard yesterday, is still there."

This last piece of news caused Percival no small perturbation.

"The only comfort," he soliloquised, "is that she is certainly not married to him, or this servant would have known it. Well, I will lose no time in finding out Pemberton. C—— cannot be much more than forty miles beyond Teesdale."

In pursuance of this resolution he started at once for C—, and, on stopping at the nearest station, engaged the best horse that was to be

procured, and arrived at Mr. Harley's, as above related.

Following the servant closely, he entered the drawing-room. Pemberton, exhausted with the various emotions and fatigues of the last few hours, was leaning back on a sofa; and did not hear the servant announce Captain Wentworth, so that his unexpected visitor had advanced to the centre of the room before he was aware that any one had

entered. On hearing the hasty footsteps, Pemberton languidly raised his eyes, which rested on the figure of his long absent friend, within a few yards of him.

"Pemberton, dear Pemberton, what is the matter?" cried Percival, in

accents of alarm, seeing him start and turn as pale as death.

The surprise and agitation occasioned by Percival's sudden and most unexpected appearance, was too much for him in his weak state of health, and Percival had just time to spring forward and catch him in his

arms as he was falling to the floor in a swoon.

Uttering an exclamation of distress, Percival, still supporting him, seized the bell-rope, which happened to be within his reach, and rung violently. This summons speedily brought two or three servants into the room, followed by Mr. Harley, whose consternation, on finding Pemberton insensible in the arms of a stranger was so great, that he could not speak for some moments.

"What the devil is your business here, sir?" he stammered at last;

"and what have you been doing to him?"

Too much agitated to heed this courteous salutation, Percival merely answered by an entreaty that they would do something for the sufferer, whom the servants had now taken from his arms and laid at full length on a sofa. One of the servants quickly brought salts and cold water. In a very few minutes Pemberton began to revive, and Mr. Harley, who had been hanging over him in speechless distress, turned to our hero, who, with a face scarcely less pale than the fainting Pemberton's—for, besides his anxiety on his friend's account, he could not help thinking that a consciousness of having some bad news to communicate concerning Florence, had some share in causing his swoon—stood motionless as a statue at some little distance.

"Allow me, sir," said the old gentleman, sternly, "to inquire what your name is, and what you have been saying or doing to this young man that has had such an ill effect upon him?"

"My name, sir," replied our hero, hurriedly, and scarcely in his agita-

tion knowing what he said, "is Percival."

"The gentleman gave his card, and announced himself as Captain Wentworth, when I admitted him five minutes ago, sir," whispered the butler to his master.

"Ha! you have an alias, it seems," said Mr. Harley, turning sharply to the intruder, as he considered him. "Then Captain Wentworth or Mr. Percival, by whichever title it pleases you to be addressed, pray oblige me by instantly quitting my house. Thomas, show this gentleman the door!" he continued, vehemently, after about three seconds' pause, during which Percival stood irresolute what to do or say.

"Sir," he commenced, roused at last by finding that he was in a very unpleasant predicament, "if you will allow me to remain until my friend has recovered his consciousness, you will find there is no cause for the

suspicion with which you not unnaturally regard me."

"He is quite right," said Pemberton, who had caught the last few words; "he is one of my best and most valued friends. Wentworth, dear Wentworth, speak to me. Mr. Harley, allow me to introduce him to you."

The old gentleman still looked for a moment somewhat doubtfully upon the stranger, then, extending his hand, said, cordially,

"Forgive me, sir, for my rudeness, for which I beg to tender my sin-

cere apologies."

Percival took his offered hand, and said,

"I ought to apologise for having, however unintentionally, caused you so much alarm."

"Pray do not mention that, sir," said Mr. Harley. "Let me beg you to take a seat. A friend of Mr. Pemberton's cannot fail to be a welcome

"And how long have you been in England, Wentworth?" said Pemberton, again pressing his hand warmly.

"I only reached London yesterday morning," was the answer. "But

you have been ill," he added, looking at him anxiously.

"A slight accident," said Pemberton, glancing at his sling. "I am almost off the sick list now. But tell me about yourself."

His companion did not seem satisfied with this answer.

"It is no use attempting to deceive me, Pemberton," he rejoined. "It makes me quite unhappy to see you. You are but the shadow of your former self.

"I am somewhat reduced in strength," said Pemberton, "but I give you my word I am recovering very fast, and you need be under no uneasiness about me."

"Are all our friends well?" asked Percival, in a voice that, notwithstanding his efforts to command it, betrayed great emotion.

"Yes, all," replied Pemberton, so pointedly, as to show the questioner that he fully understood the import of his query. We all sand would not said

Percival felt as if a weight was removed from his heart.

"Will you excuse me for a little while, as I have some letters to write," said Mr. Harley, who thought that the young men would like to be left to themselves for a time. "Captain Wentworth, we shall have the pleasure of your company to dinner, of course."

"You are very kind," replied Percival; "but I came only for half-anhour's conversation with Mr. Pemberton, before proceeding on most im-

portant business; and therefore must reluctantly decline ""

"No, no, he'll stay, I'll answer for it," interrupted Pemberton.

"Well, if you can persuade him to do so, I shall be most happy," said

Mr. Harley, and, bowing politely, he quitted the room.

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"Pemberton, you torture me," said Percival, with a quivering lip. "She has not—they have not forced her to engage herself to Craven?" "You would have no right to complain if they had," returned Pember-

ton, "since you withdrew your support at the moment when she was most severely tried. I know your motive was honourable, but forgive me, my dear friend, for saying that sometimes your ideas of honour are too highflown, and that this was a most injudicious step. However, I will not longer delay assuring you that it has led to no bad consequences. She has been dreadfully persecuted, and displayed wonderful firmness—"

"And do they still persecute her?" asked Percival. "Surely any man

but Craven would have too much spirit to persist thus."

"Sir Robert has at last done for himself," said Pemberton, "even in the eyes of Lady Seagrove."

"How so?" demanded Percival, eagerly.

"He forcibly carried her off, one evening, in a carriage-and-four."
"Carried her off!" repeated Percival, turning deadly pale. "And how

did she escape? Who-"

"Why I was fortunate enough to discover his design," answered Pemberton, "and——"

"Well," said his companion, gasping for breath.

"It was rather a narrow escape," said Pemberton, "and he was very resolute; but all ended well; we got her away from him, after a struggle, in which he fired a pistol at me, which, however, only damaged one arm."

"My brave, my noble friend!" exclaimed Percival, with great emotion.
"It is then you that I have to thank for rescuing her from that infamous

man."

He was unable to say more, but wrung Pemberton's hand with a look more expressive than words.

"My dear fellow," said Pemberton, "do not talk of gratitude. I am

but too happy that it was in my power to be of service."

"And this, then," continued Percival, after a pause, "although you

make so light of it, is the secret of your accident and illness."

He begged his friend to give him a full and exact account of the whole occurrence, which Pemberton did. Percival again expressed his heartfelt thanks, and on hearing how much they were all indebted to Mr. Harley, said that he longed to thank that gentleman for his kindness. He was for some time too much overcome with the thought of Florence's danger and escape, to attend to anything that Pemberton said on other subjects. At last, on his friend repeating for the third time, "Now, Wentworth, I have answered all your questions, and you have as yet replied to none of mine," he replied,

"I must premise, my dear Pemberton, that to do so will involve a long

story, which, however, I will relate as briefly as possible."

"It cannot be too long, if it concerns you," said Pemberton.

"I shall tax your powers of belief a good deal," observed Percival, with a half smile.

"Let your tale be as marvellous as those of the Arabian Nights," said

Pemberton, "and I will believe it on your testimony."

"I will begin by telling you that my name is not Wentworth, and that the old gentleman of that name, whom you and every one else believed to be my uncle, was not in any way related to me."

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hood up to the present time, to which recital his auditor listened with deep

"And your father," said Pemberton, when he had finished, "is-

"The Earl of Elton," said his companion.

"And you, then," pursued Pemberton, "are-let me see, what is the eldest son's title-Lord Percival. Well, my dear fellow, I congratulate you most cordially on being restored to your rights; and assure you that I know no man more worthy to fill the high station that will one day be yours, or more deserving of the hand and heart of Florence Hamilton. I suppose," he added, at the same time pleasing himself with the thought of the surprise that awaited his friend; "I suppose that your present intention is to go in search of her instantly."

"To be sure it is," answered Percival. "You will stay and dine here first?"

"Can you ask such a question seriously?"

"Yes, indeed, I can. And I'll tell you what, Wentworth-I beg ten thousand pardons-Percival, I meant to say, I'll lay you any wager you please that I make your lordship stay dinner."

"It must be vi et armis, then," was the reply.

- "No, no, of your own accord. You know not what pretty girls this house contains.'
 - "I am glad to hear it for your sake," said Percival. "Thank you," replied Pemberton, with an arch smile.

"You have been falling in love with one of them, I suspect," said his

friend. "Tell me, am I not right?"

"Not far wrong," said Pemberton. "But I will tell you more about her presently. I was going to say that I have also found a father—not my own, like you, for he, poor man, has been dead many years, and took so little interest in me while he lived, that if I could resuscitate him it would be no advantage—but a most kind and generous friend."

He then told Percival the history of his love, his scruples, and what

had passed between himself and Mr. Harley that morning.

Percival congratulated him warmly, and after discussing his friend's future prospects with great interest for some time longer, rose to depart, saying that he would visit him again in a day or two; "And then," he added, "you must introduce me to the lady of your choice, whom I am most anxious to see."

"Stay a moment, Percival," said Pemberton, looking at his watch. "If you start now you will have to wait half an hour for the train, so you may as well be contented a little longer where you are."

Percival sat down again, and there was silence for a few moments,

which Pemberton broke by saying,

"May I trouble you, my dear fellow, to walk out on to the lawn and tell that young lady, who is gathering flowers yonder, that I wish to speak with her?"

Seeing that his friend was somewhat surprised at this request, he

added:

affer that y entlangan outsite on the "I am quite in earnest, Percival-upon my word your new name is a very pretty one—and shall feel obliged by your summoning her directly."

Stepping on to the lawn from the open window, Percival approached Gertrude, and bowing, politely informed her that Mr. Pemberton was

desirous of saying a few words to her. Remembering the last occasion on which she had been desired to speak to Pemberton, Gertrude blushed deeply; and wondering who the handsome stranger was, and why she was thus summoned, followed him into the drawing-room. Pemberton thought he had never seen her look so pretty, as, with her rich curls clustering beneath her loose bonnet of white crape, her delicate blue-silk shawl half concealing, half displaying her exquisitely proportioned figure, and the flowers she had been gathering in her hands, she stood before him with heightened colour and downcast eyes, and, hesitatingly, asked him in her sweet voice what he wanted to say to her:

"I will tell you directly," he replied; "but first let me introduce you

to my friend Lord Percival."

The introduction over, he requested her to approach a little nearer,

and, in a whisper that was inaudible, said:

"Dear Gertrude, will you oblige me by sending Florence here directly. Do not say who is here. But you had better tell her," he added, remembering his own swoon, "that it is some one she does not at all expect

Gertrude instantly departed to do as she was desired.

"Some one I do not at all expect to see," repeated Florence. "Lord Swellington, perhaps?"

Gertrude shook her head.

"I must not tell you," she observed, "because Mr. Pemberton bid me not; but I may say that, though at first I could not help feeling almost sure that I had seen him before, I found, from his name when Mr. Pemberton introduced him to me, that I must have been mistaken."

"Well," said Florence, "as you will not tell me whether I guess right or not, I will put an end to the mystery by going down to the

drawing-room at once. Are you coming with me?

"I will follow you as soon as I have put these flowers in water," said Gertrude.

Florence accordingly, without the remotest suspicion who the stranger was, and feeling but slight curiosity on the subject, descended to the drawing-room

CHAPTER LII.

A woman such as it has been my doom To meet with few; a wonder of this earth
Where there is little of transcendant worth.
Shelly.

"THAT is a very lovely girl," observed Percival, when Gertrude quitted the apartment. "Is she your inamorata?"

Pemberton replied in the affirmative, and added, "I am glad you admire her, for you are, I know, very critical on the subject of female beauty."

"May I inquire, my lord," he asked, after a moment's pause, in an affectedly pompous manner, "why your lordship is consulting your watch?"

"To be sure that I am not too late," was the answer.

"Only ten minutes of the half hour is gone yet," said Pemberton, "so your lordship must curb your impatience a little longer. Is not this a pretty view?" he asked, taking his friend's arm and drawing him towards the window.

"Yes, very," answered Percival, abstractedly.

"You have hardly condescended to look at it, my lord," said Pemberton.

"Yes, indeed I have," answered Percival; "and, by-the-by, Pemberton, the sooner you get tired of this joke of calling me 'my lord' and

'your lordship,' the better."

"I do not intend tiring of it yet," answered Pemberton, laughing maliciously. "You know I always loved to tease you a little, Wentworth. How stupid I am!" he added, a moment afterwards, recollecting his mistake. "I fear I shall not be able to help calling you Wentworth more often than anything else for the next month to come."

"I shall not quarrel with you for that," answered Percival. "It reminds me of our friendship, and the many pleasant hours we have had

together.'

"Well, that is a tolerably civil speech for a lover absorbed with thoughts of his fair one," observed Pemberton. "By-the-by, Percival, I wonder why love should make you so much more dull, and absent, and serious than it does me."

Before Percival could reply, the door opened, and Florence entered.

Percival mechanically turned round, expecting to see Mr. Harley, and his surprise at beholding Florence was so great as for a moment entirely to deprive him of speech and motion. He quickly recovered both, however, on perceiving the effect that the unexpected sight of himself had on Florence. She turned extremely pale, and staggered as if about to fall.

Rushing up to her, he clasped her in his arms, and, as Pemberton happened to be gazing intently at the distant landscape, he took the opportunity of imprinting several fond kisses upon her lips and cheek. For a moment he feared that his appearance had occasioned a second fainting fit, but he was re-assured by seeing the paleness of her beautiful cheek give place to a bright flush of joy, which, however, quickly faded away again, as on his offering her his hand to lead her to a seat, she gently drew back, and whispered:

"Why are you here? For your own sake—for mine, you had better

have stayed away."

"Did you not give me permission to return, if ever I was restored to my rights, and claim you as my bride in a new character?" cried her lover, again folding her in his arms, and pressing her to his heart with rapture. "Yes," he continued, impetuously, as she regarded him with mingled hope and doubt; "this time has indeed arrived; and dearest—dearest Florence, say that you love me still—that you are not changed in feelings since we parted!"

"Changed in feelings towards you!" repeated Florence, raising her eyes for a moment to his face as she spoke, with a look that made these few words as satisfactory an answer as even he could have desired.

"My lord," said Pemberton, who had sauntered a few steps on to the lawn, and now re-entered, "allow me to remind your lordship that you will be too late for the train."

Florence, blushing deeply as she first became aware of Pemberton's

presence, said, in a hurried and embarrassed manner, that she would go and announce Percival's arrival to Lady Seagrove, and quitted the

"I wish my first interview with Lady Seagrove were over," said Percival to Pemberton, after a short silence. "I shall not be at all surprised if she looks coolly upon me, and, though too polite to say so, dis-

believes my story."

"I think she will not," said Pemberton. "She is a good deal changed of late. She seems to have found out at last that there are such things as hearts in the world, and to suspect that they may be broken. She is, I believe—though, of course, I have nothing definite to go upon -really penitent for the persecution of Florence, which certainly would never have been carried so far, had it not been for an odious, violenttempered brother of hers, who chose to take up the affair. Besides, even if she should not believe you at first, it will in reality be but of little consequence, as you can soon enforce conviction by sending your noble father to her."

"But suppose," said Percival, "that in the first impulse of unbelief she refuses me Florence's hand?"

"Well, my dear fellow, suppose she does? We are sure she will retract her refusal as soon as she finds that you are neither a madman nor a pretender, and that there is a real and not a visionary coronet in perspective; for surely, in her most ambitious moments, she would have been satisfied with the eldest son of an earl, who had one of the longest rent-rolls and most ancient pedigrees in the kingdom, for the husband of Florence."

"You are right, Pemberton," said Percival; "but I confess I should

prefer having it all settled at once."

"It would be pleasanter, no doubt," answered Pemberton. "And now, as Lady Seagrove will doubtless be here in a few moments, had I not better take myself off, that you may be tête-à-tête? I will go to my good old friend, Harley, and tell him your history, shall I?"

"Thank you, my dear Pemberton. I should be very glad to have my character cleared up in his eyes. But had you not better go and take some rest in your own room, instead? Mr. Harley's being enlightened

a few hours sooner or later cannot signify."

"Oh, no, I want no rest at present," returned Pemberton. "Your arrival, and the happy turn in my own affairs, have done more towards hastening my convalescence than could have been effected by all the doctors in the universe and all the drugs in the pharmacopæia.

With these words, he withdrew to seek Mr. Harley in his study. His appearance caused the old gentleman both surprise and pleasure; which last feeling was redoubled when Pemberton, after recounting Percival's history—in which his auditor was as much interested as even the young man, with his warm and almost enthusiastic sentiments of friendship could expect or desire—told him that he intended joining the family party at dinner that day, for the first time.

Percival, in the mean while, found his interview with Lady Seagrove by no means so unpleasant as he had anticipated. Indeed, it was not unpleasant at all; for Lady Seagrove received him very graciously, saying that Florence had some time ago acquainted her with the former part of his romantic and interesting story, the sequel of which she (Lady Seagrove) had always believed, and often told Florence, would be a happy one, and that there was no man in the world on whom she would so gladly bestow her dear girl as himself. She, moreover, added that she had once or twice met Lord Elton in company many years ago, when she thought him the handsomest man she had ever seen; and that it would give her the greatest pleasure to see him again, independently of his near relationship to one about to become so interesting to her.

"I give you joy, Percival," said Pemberton, when his friend told him the result of this interview. "You see I should have won my wager about your staying dinner. I hope your arrangements will allow of your remaining here two or three days, which I know Mr. Harley intends ask-

ing you to do."

"I regret to say they will not," replied Percival, "for I promised my father to be in town again to-morrow; and although he begged me not to return if I felt inclined to stay longer, he is so unwell and low-spirited that I do not like to leave him long by himself. When do you think you shall be coming into the South again?"

"I have engaged to escort Lady Seagrove, who has a great horror of travelling without a gentleman, to Seagrove Hall, in about three or four days' time," replied Pemberton, "where we shall meet, no doubt, for I

shall be staying for some weeks at my brother's."

"You will not, at any rate, leave us until late in the evening," said Mr. Harley to Percival, when he had heard his decision. "I approve the feeling which prompts your departure too much to press you to change your mind; but as it may be long," he continued, looking round with glistening eyes upon the assembled party—for it was as they sat round the table after dinner that this conversation took place—" as it may be long before I see any of you again, and as I shall probably never again meet you all together—"

Percival interrupted him to say that he trusted he would meet them all again, and that very shortly; which sentiment was warmly echoed

by every one present.

"Your sister has more than half promised," said Lady Seagrove,

"that you will both visit me before long."

"And you will surely be present at our marriage, dear sir?" said Pemberton, looking at Gertrude.

Mr. Harley shook his head. "I have lived so long out of the world,"

he commenced-

"That it is time you should at least occasionally revisit it," said Pem-

berton, earnestly.

"Well, I must consider the matter," answered Mr. Harley. "But remember, you have all promised to come and visit me, whether I make up my mind to emerge from my retreat or not."

The evening passed but too quickly for the four lovers and Mr. Harley,

who appeared as happy as any of the party.

He was sitting in the midst of them, as they formed a little group round one of the windows, sharing their gay conversation, and feeling himself grow young again as he listened to their happy earnest voices, or watched the bright smiles excited by some witty remark or lively repartee; when a servant brought a letter to Lady Seagrove, who, seated at a little distance, was conversing with Miss Harley, the perusal of which seemed to throw her into a state of considerable agitation. Florence was quickly by her side, anxiously inquiring what was the matter. Lady Seagrove replied by putting the letter into her hand. It ran as follows:

"My dearest friend and patroness,—I am about to take a step which must undoubtedly be called the most important of my life. As I am influenced by the most unselfish and disinterested motives, and as I consult not my own wishes, but the happiness and welfare of another, I trust your ladyship will not only forgive, but commend a precipitancy which, under ordinary circumstances, would be blameable. Although we felt sure that your ladyship, whose goodness and kindness is almost angelic, would not oppose the union of two fond and youthful hearts, which would have pined and withered like blighted rose-buds apart from each other, there were proud relatives whose consent might not have been so readily granted; and it is for this reason that we have resolved to conduct the affair secretly. He said that it was not necessary to write even to your ladyship until all was over; but I never was, and I trust never shall be, deaf to the voice of gratitude and honour, and I therefore determined on despatching this letter. The scorching tears which blind my eyes and blister my paper as I write, the bursting sighs which rend my aching and agitated bosom, the palpitation of my heart, which throbs as though it were bent on annihilating the frail walls of its prison-house, would prove to you, were you but near me at this instant, how dreadful are the struggles with which I resign a post which, had not the inexorable Fates decreed otherwise, it would have been my greatest pride and pleasure to have retained until the latest hour of my existence, that of your faithful and constant companion. Farewell, most beloved and revered lady; and do not-oh, do not let your kind heart indulge one harsh thought of her who, before you receive this, will have become

" WILHELMINA CRAVEN."

An exclamation of surprise escaped Florence when she arrived at the signature.

"It is strange, my dear, is it not?" demanded Lady Seagrove.

"Strange indeed," replied Florence, hardly able to suppress a smile at the absurd style of the note, which she still held in her hand.

"And very ungrateful," said Lady Seagrove.

Florence assented. If she had owned the truth, her strongest feeling on the occasion was lively satisfaction that the favourite's baneful influence over Lady Seagrove would henceforth be at an end.

"What do you think, Lord Percival, of your old acquaintance Sir

Robert Craven being married?" asked Lady Seagrove.

Percival looked surprised, and inquired to whom. Lady Seagrove informed him, and added, "You had better read her letter, it is quite a curiosity." Pemberton and Gertrude approached on hearing what was passing, and Miss Trimmer's effusion was the subject of no little merriment to the whole party.

"How I long to introduce you to my father," said Percival to Florence, as later in the evening they were conversing together, a little apart from

any of the other groups. "I am sure you will love him."

"I am sure I shall," replied Florence, earnestly; "I love him already from hearing you speak of him, and we will try all we can to make him

happy."

Percival thanked her by a fond and grateful look, and Lord Elton would have been pleased could he have heard how intimately and affectionately his name was connected with all the plans and thoughts for the future which occupied the young lovers.

It was not until a late hour in the evening that Percival started on his journey back to town, after receiving the kind adieus of all the party he left behind, not one of whom but was warmly interested in him, and sin-

cerely regretted his departure.

"I shall always," he said to Florence, when, after many tender and lingering farewells, he at length turned to step into the carriage which was waiting for him, "I shall always remember this day as one of the happiest of my life."

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

BY G. W. THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF "BALLADS OF THE NEW WORLD."

The stars they shone dim, and the night wind was sighing, When the wanderer came to the home of his youth; And he thought of the hopes now all faded and dying, Once green in the spring-tide of love and of truth.

On the paths, all grass-covered, the wild weeds grew rank,
The thistle sprang up where the tulip had blown,
Green moss o'er the gateway's escutcheon spread dank,
And the dark ivy trailed where the roses had grown.

The lattice flapped open, and through the dim chamber Crept moaning and wailing the wild autumn breeze; And by the old tower, where he once loved to clamber, Fell the pattering leaves from the withering trees.

The broad-studded door on its hinges now rusted,
Showed the hangings in shreds on the mould-covered walls;
The old oaken floor with green mildew's encrusted,
And his footfall rings mournfully through the wide halls.

"Dear friends of my childhood—Oh! where are ye wandered?" In anguish the penitent prodigal cried.

He listened a moment, and while he still pondered, "Where are ye?" the pitiless echo replied.

WELLINGTON IN PRIVATE LIFE.*

The curiosity to know and hear more about the private life of England's greatest hero is both natural and legitimate. His public acts are chronicled in history, but his little acts of daily life are little, if at all, known; the duke, great in achievements, was so simple and unostentatious in manners that he has, in fact, left little to record; yet, it is in his domestic life that he is brought into more immediate relation with his fellow-countrymen; hence the interest felt in all contributions that add to the small amount of what was known before—hence the rush to Apsley House, and the earnest interest felt in an over-coat, a time-piece or a thermometer, a travel-stained despatch-box, and even a suppositious bed; of which a cockney remarked, "How convenient it was to run away into the park in case of an attack on the house." The hero of a hundred fights running away before a cockney mob!

The author of "Three Years with the Duke; or, Wellington in Private Life," is understood to be Lord William Lennox, and the three years were not among the least eventful in his lordship's life. They comprised the embassy to Paris, the Congress at Vienna, the return of Napoleon from Elba, the battle of Waterloo, the entry into Paris, and some portion of the period of Occupation; concerning which latter epoch Lord William's

materials are, however, scanty.

The duke, during his residence at Paris, took up his quarters at the Hôtel Borghese, Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, and apart from presentations, fêtes, and reviews; the hunts which the duke attended in French costume—cocked hat, gold-laced coat, couteau de chasse, and jack-boots—are recorded with gusto.

The rendezvous on the occasion I write of, was at La Croix du Grand Veneur, an obelisk at a spot where four roads meet, and which, according to an ancient legend, receives its name from a spectral black huntsman, who was supposed to haunt the forest, and who appeared to the fourth Henry shortly before his assassination. No sooner had we descended from the carriage, and were about to mount our hunters, than up galloped an advanced guard of cuirassiers, sword in hand, desiring us to draw up in a line, as the king and royal family were approaching. We had scarcely time to comply with this order, before a body-guard of lancers clattered past us, at a tremendous pace; immediately after them followed a magnificent carriage, the whole body covered with gold, and the arms of France emblazoned upon the panels, with four tall footmen in state liveries perched up behind. This "monster" coachwas drawn by eight short-tailed brown English horses, six in hand (a feat worthy of Batty), and a postillion on the leaders, in a huge cocked hat, with powdered head, blue coat covered with silver lace, and a Brobdignag pair of In the carriage were his majesty, the Duc and Duchesse D'Angoulème, and the Comte d'Artois - equerries in waiting riding by the side. Then came another carriage and eight, containing the Duc de Berri and hisaid-de-camp. Two empty landaus followed, in case of accidents; a very necessary precaution, considering the badness of the roads, and the weight of what the London coachmen call "live lumber" that occupied them. A strong body of "heavys" brought up the rear.

The French princes, after warmly recognising the Duke, now mounted their English thoroughbred hunters, and prepared themselves pour la chasse. The

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^{*} Three Years with the Duke; or, Wellington in Private Life. By an Ex-Aid-de-Camp. Second Edition. Saunders and Otley.

king and the Duchesse d'Angoulème, after calling Wellington to the carriage, exchanged their heavy Lord Mayor's coach for a light open barouche, and, attended by the ranger and deputy ranger of the forest in uniform, and a party of gendarmerie, drew up by the cover's side. The hounds, though the piqueur declared they were genuine natives, had evidently a cross of our foxhound. The huntsman was magnificently "got up" in a long blue coat covered with lace, jack-boots, chain spurs, and sported a powdered peruke and a gold-laced cocked hat, worthy of a London sweep on a May-day. A large French horn was slung over his shoulder, and a huge conteau de chasse hung by his side. His horse, who looked as if he had been fatted for a Smithfield cattle show, was as fine as red velvet housings, leather holsters, gold-embossed bridle and crupper could make him. The valets de chiens wore cocked hats, scarlet jackets, white "unmentionables," silk stockings, and pumps. A few gens-darmes, on long-tailed, black job-looking horses, were present to protect royalty from the pressure of mobility. The hounds were now laid on, and all remained breathlessly straining their ears to catch the à droits and à gauches which were hallooed out to intimate which way the deer was running. At last the Duc de Berri gave a shout that would have done honour to the warcry of the Ojibeway Indians, and, putting spurs to his horse, started off at the rate of twenty miles an hour, followed by the gensd'armes, who in vaintried to keep up with the royal sportsman. "Hold hard! Give them time!" shouted the duc, interspersing his injunctions with certain little execrations, which proved his royal highness to be perfectly conversant with our native

In a second, away went the whole field, deer, hounds, huntsmen, sportsmen—royal, noble, and simple—equestrians, pedestrians, amidst the shouts of the gathered multitude, For awhile, the deer kept to the forest; but, finding himself hotly pressed, took to the open country, followed by all our own countrymen, who had passed some portion of their time in "merrie England." "Hold hard!" shouted the Duc de Berri. "Arrêtez, messieurs!" cried the piqueur. "Turn him back to de vood!" ejaculated another. Despite, however, of all these injunctions, and the volleys of foreign maledictions, we succeeded in keeping the pack in full cry over a fair hunting country, taking regular French leave of the royal sportsmen. One of the huntsmen went the first field with us, but at the end of it there was a small grip (for ditch it could not be called); this caused the mighty Nimrod to "crane;" and when we shouted that there was nothing to stop him, he politely took off his hat and said—"Au revoir, messieurs; je ne saute pas les grands fossés." The plain was passed, a small, thickly-grown wood skirted, a brook with steep and deep banks crossed, some swampy meadows traversed, until a lake appeared in view, "He's dead beat!" shouted the self-elected huntsman, a sporting attaché of the duke's; and even so it was, for the words were scarcely uttered, ere the deer was seen evidently distressed, the hounds almost within sight of him. From scent to view was beautiful. "Hark forward!" was echoed around. The stag now gained the

lake, and plunged into it.

Anxious to save the noble animal, some of us whipped off the hounds, whilst others were up to their middles in water, trying with a "lasso," formed of stirrup-leathers, to secure the "poor sequestered stag." At this moment, the Duc de Berri, accompanied by his royal brother and an aid-de-camp, galloped up. We all shrank back, expecting a severe rebuke, when, to our great surprise, a saccharine smile beamed upon the royal countenances. "Well, duke, this is an English run!" exclaimed the good-humoured Duc de Berri. Our duke made a suitable reply. "How splendidly your royal highness took that last fence!" said the aid-de-camp. We looked round—it was scarce four feet high! "And the brook! your royal highness," exclaimed a young Englishman; "it was a regular Wissendine!" The piqueurs, gens-d'armes, and the rest of the field came tailing up, all declaring that the chasse was "magnifique!" To account for the arrival of these above-mentioned worthies, I must mention that a road ran nearly parallel with the line we had taken; upon

nearing us, they gave up their "highway" system, and some of the "hard riders" had selected a narrow part of a small stream and a couple of fences, to show off their prowess. During the time of these boastings, the Duc d'Angoulème had with a rifle given (as the courtiers said) the coup de grâce to the hunted animal, whose "heart's best blood was on the waters." Quicker eyes, and less flattering tongues, however, attributed the murderous deed to the keeper, who fired at the same time his royal master did.

At one of the reviews held at this epoch in the Champ de Mars, there were several fatal accidents, and four or five bullets whistled close to the spot occupied by the Due de Berri and Wellington, and caused a considerable sensation at the time; whether they were the effects of design

or accident remained a mystery.

Many anecdotes in this book attest that Wellington was as good in all the kindly offices of social intercourse as he was great in the more extended duties of the field. Lord William Lennox having lamed one of the duke's most valuable horses in a hunt, his perturbation was great, but all the duke said was:

"I can't afford to run the chance of losing all my best horses; so in future you shall have the brown horse and the chestnut mare; and if you

knock them up, you must afterwards mount yourself."

Lord William was, indeed, constantly getting into grief, and the duke as certainly never failed to reprove him, but he was never resentful; the moment he had spoken, and had seen a disposition on the part of the offender to reform, he treated him as if nothing had occurred. The Congress, "which danced, but did not move," at Vienna was put a sudden stop to by the return from Elba, and the duke set out at once to join the army in the Netherlands. Lord William had then to make way for tried men of the Peninsula. The pas de Zephyr was not wanted on the field of Waterloo. The duke was always joking his aid-de-camp upon this said pas de Zephyr, which he would often smile at; and once, on the occasion of the aid-de-camp getting a new pair of tight Hessians, he expressed his serious apprehensions lest the said pas should suffer in consequence. He was, indeed, Lord William says, constantly called upon to execute this pas for his grace's amusement!

Some of the witticisms of the French, upon the occupation of Paris by the Allies and the restoration of the Bourbons, are amusing, and add to what we already know of those stirring times from the pages of Simpson.

During the summer, a miscreant attempted the life of Wellington, by firing a pistol at the hero, which happily missed its aim. It would have been a lamentable end to the career of this great man, after escaping the dangers of a hundred battles, to have fallen by the hand of an assassin. The ball, fortunately, was directed too high, and gave rise to the following epigram,—a futile attempt at satire, but which doubtless the French Peter Pindar thought sublime:

Mal ajuster est un défaut,
Il le manqua, et voici comme,
L'imbecille visa trop haut,
Il l'avoit pris, pour un grand homme.

Wellington could well afford to treat this effusion with sovereign contempt; and we should not have alluded to it, had it not been the topic of much conversation at the time.

At the reviews of Denain amateur theatricals were got up under the direction of Mr. Commissioner Fonblanque, of the Court of Bankruptcy, then an officer in the 21st Fusiliers.

Never shall I forget the shouts of laughter that Wellington indulged in, at the performance of the highly-talented author of "Highways and Byways," or the attention with which he listened to the singing of Messrs. Meade, Fairfield, and Kelly, the latter an especial favourite at head-quarters. Out of the above corps dramatique, four of the members afterwards resigned their commissions, and made the stage their profession: Cole, the Calcraft of the Dublin theatre; Prescott, the Warde of Covent Garden; Frederick Yates, of the Adelphi, and Benson Hill.

What a lesson this for young men! We must terminate, however, with the following brief panegyric of the hero:

In his private career, few have exceeded Wellington in kind actions. was a judicious counsellor, and his advice was ever at the service of his friends. He was guided by extreme caution, wonderful sagacity, and the most discriminating judgment; patient in his inquiries, assiduous in his labours, persevering in weighing and considering every difficulty, with a mind capable of grasping the mightiest, yet never overlooking the most minute matter. Wellington was slow to form a decision, but, having once made up his mind, nothing could make him swerve. His powers of observation were remarkably. clear and acute. He read thoughtfully, and his memory was singularly tenacious of facts. In the senate, his speeches were vigorous and effective. He was a generous man, in the truest sense of the word, unostentatious and discriminating in his liberality. He loved to encourage talent of every order, and his house was always open to the best and most rising artists of the day. Wellington was an early riser, simple in his habits, temperate in his diet, and abstemious to the greatest degree; for although he lived at a period when drinking was one of the grossest vices of the day, he was never once known to be guilty of any excess. He was strictly attentive to his person; neat in his dress, but never appeared in gaudy apparel. Had he worn a tenth part of those wellearned honours which his valorous deeds had gained for him, his breast would have sparkled with brilliants. The badge of the patron saint of England, the ribbon of the Golden Fleece of Spain, and the unpretending silver medal, bearing the inscription of Waterloo, were the only decorations he was usually in the habit of wearing. He was firmly attached to the institutions of his country, his career being one of patriotic devotion.

CHANGE.

BY MARGARET CASSON.

CHAPTER VIII.

The slow, sweet hours which bring us all things good,
The slow, sad hours which bring us all things ill,
And all good things from evil, brought the night
In which we sat together and alone.

It was as I have said such a very wet day, and at Arlingford Hall the whole party were in actual despair. They had been endeavouring to while away the morning as best they may. Poor victims! their enjoyment consisting, as is often the case with mornings at a country house, like the inhabitants of Sans Souci, in conjugating in every possible variety of mood and tense, the verb s'ennuyer! Morning decidedly was never intended for a time of mere pleasure, and these unfortunate people this dismal day certainly proved that the endeavour to make it so was regu-

whether as house on abroad, he it see

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larly opposed to the laws of nature. In true English fashion the gentlemen had chiefly sought refuge in the billiard-room; the ladies dragged on a weary existence in the drawing-room, trying to kill time, which that morning clung most pertinaciously to life, idling over the last novel, or a few stitches of work, discussing small inanities, looking out of window, and wishing it were luncheon time. "Thus they passed an idle summer's day, they fluttered on from toy to toy, from vanity to folly"all but Eleanor, and Eleanor was very restless that morning, and she had spent it chiefly, almost entirely alone; she could not remain with others, her thoughts were so sadly confused and in perplexity. They had been so ever since she had met Dugald so unexpectedly the previous night. She did not attempt to analise, she dared not question her own heart; in a maze of bewilderment and uncertainty she had allowed her mind to wander, and though she knew perfectly well her conduct towards him had been most reprehensible, she would not pause to own even to herself that it had been so. Yet her mind was ill at ease; for so constituted is humanity that conscience will hold its appointed place, and bear its authority in the system, though often it may speak unheeded, still involuntarily it makes us feel our errors, even through the mask of pride or worldliness with which we strive to cover and conceal the faithful monitor. Eleanor Stanley was never fond of owning herself wrong, and though in her own heart there dwelt the feeling that she was so, she

would not certify it by words.

The time, which had passed on Dugald's part with such devoted constancy and untiring faith, had sped very differently with Eleanor. It had been one continued struggle and striving between her endeavour to keep intact her plighted faith, and her shortcomings and failings to maintain it pure and undefiled - not against any other rival, but before the temptations of the pomps and vanities of earth. Her life had scarcely been a happy one; she had entered the world with the weight of her fatal secret on her heart, knowing that though he had refused to allow her to pledge herself wholly his, yet feeling in honour bound to him; acutely alive to all its allurements, yet perpetually drawing back, and feeling she ought to have no part in them; for ever swerving and giving way to the dazzling illusions passing before her, and then again bitterly expiating her folly with many a sorrowful tear, shed in her silent hours; with endeavourings to recal Dugald's words, and the reality, the enthraldom and power of the moment when she listened to them spoken; for so seldom did she ever hear him mentioned, and if at all, so slightly, they began to assume but the form of a dream, and there seemed nothing tangible appertaining to them. Doubts of his love being true to her racking her soul also; and then her ambitious heart listening so eagerly to her father's proud words and vain hopes for her future; the knowledge of her own beauty, which she could not but know, and of her right to rule, and of her feelings of superiority to those with whom she mingled. She felt her power, and she gloried in it, but nothing more; for Eleanor was too proud to be vain. The tide of her thoughts coming and going, ebbing and flowing so rapidly, she never was at rest, a combat for ever existing between an impulse scorning repression, and a will which wished to govern, but which found its power very insufficient to cope with the contending strength opposed to it; and wherever she went, whether at home or abroad, as a relentless ghost by her side which she

could not exorcise, wandered the remembrance of Dugald Annesley, and the promised faith beneath the hawthorn trees. Perhaps had they met otherwise, events might have been different; as it was, Eleanor scarcely knew how to act when they did meet. She had felt frightened, yet happy, when she so suddenly heard she was to see him once again; the uncertainty which so oppressed her must cease now, and, if her bow was cold to Dugald's mind, she did not feel cold then; but a woman naturally is reticent when she really loves, and Eleanor Stanley, when she passed by her lover, felt only the simple loving girl once more. Later, she was annoyed at Dugald's tardiness in approaching her that evening: she knew not that Dennis Conway was its cause; and when he did come, her pride was in arms against him. She felt injured at his only joining her when surrounded by others; had he come at once, their greeting need not have been so cold. Perhaps, too, Dugald was right when he told me, that if Eleanor doubted him, she must have felt that she had been to a degree false in her turn; and so, with the weakness of poor, failing human nature, she was eager to catch at any error perceivable in him, to excuse her own conduct. Certainly she worked herself up that evening to a wonderful pitch of causeless jealousy, on the strength of a single sentence, and that night almost persuaded herself she was a much aggrieved and slighted woman; the sinned against rather than the sinning; and acting on this supposition, was wondrously gracious for the rest of the evening to Lord Ravenscroft, which line of conduct made his little lordship in a state of extreme beatitude and unprecedented liveliness. It was desirable, at all events, that one of the party should have something to please them! But all this added to the complication of the whole; and you will generally find it to be the case, that let concord between two mortals be unharmonised, each step they take after the first discord has arisen but plunges them deeper in internal dissension of heart, and widens the estrangement; they see ali de travers wrapped in delusion, and reckless antagonism becomes almost unconsciously their governing principle. The sun of love which irradiated their inner world (the day-star of their hearts), grows dark, eclipsed by the shadow which has come between them, and the earth darkens the mild radiance of the enlightener of the night. And so Eleanor thought herself the aggrieved one, and blamed Dugald to her heart's content, and lay down to rest in the impatience of her own proud spirit. Oh! where wandered the remembrance of the sweet guiding counsels now? of the warning words once so fondly prized-of the warm, trusting faith, and the sinking yet clinging heart, which anchored on her love alone? And she so lovely and so pure to look upon!

> And she so very fair;— Yes, as spirits when They meeken not to God, but men.

Poor tempted, erring Eleanor! But how felt she on the morrow?—that morrow which rose, cold and serene, once again to check her feverish thoughts? Ah! no wonder Eleanor felt restless, doubting then. In the calm, pure light of early day, she could not quite so determinedly stifle truth, but it dawned before her but imperfectly; the thought must contain the accusing tongue, though the stubborn heart might refuse it utterance. And later, she heard that he was coming to Arlingford

again that day—and how were they to meet? It could not be a repetition of the previous night. Unity for ever, or disunion, must be the result!

And in the tranquil solitude of her chamber heavily throbbed the heart of Eleanor, beneath the pressure of the thoughts which, surging and contending, striving for mastery the one with the other, like waves of molten lead, flowed through her mind, until from its intensity and undeterminedness thought itself became almost a very vacancy; watching mechanically in monotony of sight the falling rain, and in that morbid impressible frame of mind when the spirit is so keenly alive to the influence of external things. And well did the dirge-like sound of the moaning of the dreary blast, the weeping sky, and the mournful rain-dripping trees, seem but too well attuned to the sadness of her own unfixed, irresolute heart. Woe, woe, distress and sorrow seemed borne to her excited sense alone, amid the dismal sounds on the wings of that storm; and thus did Eleanor's morning pass away. At length she could bear it no longer; even more perturbed, more sad and sorrowful did she feel than when she abandoned herself to her grieving meditations. The unbroken solitude oppressed her; she thought now it would almost be relief to mingle with the lighthearted and the careless, and to hear some sound of human kind; if she stayed longer there alone she could no more restrain her tears, and so with a sigh she rose, and with the world-mask of a smile and an unruffled peace on her beautiful face, and the heart which beat beneath it, fast bound in misery and iron, Eleanor Stanley joined the party below.

As she entered the room, she dwelt upon the group there assembled almost enviously; they looked so calm, so happy, quietly seated there, as if they had nothing to make them sad, to weigh heavy upon their hearts. She looked at them as we are apt to look at others when under the influence of a secret sorrow ourselves; who has not done so in their hours of sadness, who has not thought how happy the lot of others, how happy are others themselves in the comparison? Forgetting that we, too, in our turn, to them seem cheerful, gay, and sorrowless; forgetting how in this world we wear a face-mask, and a spirit-mask, so habitually, until we assume it naturally, it has become a very part and parcel of ourselves; that a double consciousness exists in which we move; the outward and visible life, how different to the inward and spiritual existence! the one, seen and known by all, the other, how ignored, and most by those amongst whom we live and move, the very mortals amid whom our everyday existence passes away. How little do they fathom, how little understand the sentiments, passions, and feelings of those nearest and dearest to them! Unfathomable, incomprehensible mystery. How inexplicable and perplexed a bewilderment to poor humanity is this life's being! Yet in the selfish egotism of our hearts, complaining of our own burdens, and bending beneath their weight, how apt are we to forget that each of our brother pilgrims here below has likewise borne, or is now bearing, his heavy burden too, through the toil and the heat of the day. Did we remember this circumstance more frequently, how much might we not do to alleviate each others sufferings, cultivating the brotherhood of Abel each to each, rather than increasing sorrow by nourishing towards, and meeting our fellow workers with, feelings of contempt, and in the hard defiant spirit of fratricidal Cain!

She gave one hasty glance around; Dugald had not come. She was

glad of it, it would be easier to meet him with the rest than alone to have to greet him. No; it was all the same as she had left them. Lord Arlingford and Mr. Leslie (Lord Ravenscroft's farming friend of the previous evening) were still discussing that interminable subject, excepting that she had left them at mangel-wurzle, and now they had arrived in the ascending scale (or descending, I suppose I ought to say) of a discussion on draining, government loans for the same, and draining tiles!

Still might be heard in the distance the uniform sound of the rolling billiard-balls, and those untiring players. Still were Mr. Stanley and Lady Arlingford prosing on together, her ladyship with difficulty suppressing the yawn, yet in the anxiety to conciliate Mr. Stanley, and to forward the much desired union between the two families, with martyr-like merit, patiently submitting to the infliction that weary day, of seeking enlivenment from the dull gleams of "Diogenes'" lantern! Mr. Ashton still devoted to Lady Harriet Conway, and Eleanor herself feeling as restless and harassed as before; she wished herself back once more in her solitude.

"You have deserted us this morning, Miss Stanley," said Mr. Ash-

ton, rising as she approached.

"Yes, I have been leading a Robinson Crusoe kind of life," she rereplied—"indulging in the luxury of solitary meditations."

"I hope they were profitable and satisfactory thoughts."

"I do not think they were exactly," said she, laughing. "I was meditating upon my sins."

"Thinking, thinking on the days that are no more, Eleanor?" asked

Lady Harriet.

"What a day to choose for such an employment," exclaimed Mr. Ashton, fixing his satirical eyes upon her. "Now, I never give way to sentiment, it is the greatest mistake in the world, especially when it rains. I always turn away from the window on such a day, and look at nothing but the fire, and by this means obtain the most charming equanimity of mind, so that I am always peculiarly lively at such a time—think only of the merry sunshine and so forth—the sunshine being lodged cela va sans dire, in my own heart."

"Do you? I wish," rejoined Eleanor, "I could be equally philosophical; but, unfortunately, I am always very much influenced by the

day-a perfect barometer my temperament."

"Um! more the pity; the worst thing in the world, depend upon it it is, to let your thoughts dwell upon the retrospect. The best way, believe me, is to take the seasons as they come to us, as nature teaches us,

Tout change dans la nature, Tout nous dit qu'il faut changer,

as the song tells us, so why not do likewise?"

"What a delightful world-doctrine," said Eleanor, laughing; "worthy of Vanity Fair; only you know, Mr. Ashton, you do not think what you say, or feel it, so all this wise advice falls very powerless—you do not practise what you preach."

"Do I not?" he replied. "It is the remark of a great writer, and one well acquainted with mankind nevertheless, that doing so is of no consequence; it is our words, not our actions, which have force here

After Junctions Lostion legisle the oth

below."

"What a very fallacious precept," said Lady Harriet.

"Very," said Eleanor. "Ah! he said so once, but from what I have read latterly of his works, I doubt very much his continuing to think so now. Yet words have, however, even idle words, far more power and effect than people often deem or admit."

"True," replied Harriet Conway; "but the preacher who does not act up to his doctrine, who does not enforce it by his example, he who teaches, 'Do as I say, and not as I do,' will never be the man to carry

much weight in the world."

"What a learned discussion," said Mr. Ashton, "has my small advice, so meekly and humbly given, engendered—a present example truly of the unwitting force of idle words, indeed! I will sit here and listen to you, Lady Harriet, by the hour together, if you will only condescend to instruct me," continued he, leaning back with mock resignedness in his chair, "and shall rise, I am certain, much benefited by the discourse, for truly can I say you both preach and practise."

"Thank you," replied Lady Harriet, colouring slightly, "but I am far too great a disciple of St. Paul's to usurp authority and not to keep silence. I have not, moreover, arrived at that high pitch of woman's mission, to take my place amongst the women of England, and lecture

as a strong-minded woman should, pro bono publico."

"Is not luncheon very late to-day?" said Lord Arlingford, suddenly.
"I ordered it later," replied his wife, "thinking Dennis would be returned."

"Dennis! what is Dennis out to-day?"

"He is gone to drive Mr. Annesley here, as he promised last night."
"The boy must be mad to go such a day as this," muttered the father.

"I thought so," replied Lady Arlingford; "but in his devotion to his

friend go he would."

"Poor dear!" exclaimed Mr. Ashton. "Dennis will become speedily a perfect model of self-sacrifice, with a semper accelerando movement; now mark me if he does not, Miss Stanley," he added in a low voice to Eleanor.

"I think you had better not wait any longer for him, for he does not seem coming," said Lord Arlingford, fidgeting about.

And so luncheon was ordered, and they all adjourned to the dining-

room. And in the midst of the meal they came.

"Does not Conway remind you of Landseer's picture of the 'Member of the Humane Society,' Miss Stanley?" said Mr. Ashton, as Dennis, wrapped up in his shaggy coat up to his eyes, stood under the portico, leaning his hands on the window-sill, looking at the party.

Eleanor tried her best to smile; she felt so heart-sinking and nervous,

she knew not what to do.

They came in; Dugald looking pale, but quite collected—perfectly at his ease. They only bowed, and Eleanor felt positively reckless now. Dennis Conway rattled on, talking and laughing whilst he ate his luncheon; and Eleanor talked and laughed on too, and tried to think she did not care; if Dugald would be cold, and neglect her, let it pass—the loss was his.

Adjoining the drawing-room, at the end of the suite of apartments, was a little room, a sort of boudoir, never much frequented, which opened into the conservatory. After luncheon, Eleanor, leaving the others, went

there. For some time she stood by the window, pressing her forehead against the pane, looking out on the dreary sight. Bitter was the smile which flitted across her face, and proud and determined the expression of her haughty beauty for a little while as there she stood; but it did not last long, and turning away, she went to the sofa, so far profiting by Mr. Ashton's advice, that now she sat facing the fire, turned from the window. Nay, more, she took up a book, and appeared studiously pursuing it; but as she sedulously held it upside down, I doubt her studies profiting her much. She felt a weary burden to herself; the heart sank back into its old track of desolateness and internal dejection. She might have sat there some half hour, when her deep researches in the volume were interrupted by the sound of a voice addressing her. Starting from her musings, she looked up. It was, as usual, Mr. Ashton; he seemed to possess ubiquity that day.

"Meditating upon your sins again, Miss Stanley?" he exclaimed.
"Comme une arraignée, rather, I believe méditant des crimes," she

replied, trying to look gay.

"Oh! weaving a tangled web then, I presume?"

"Exactly so," answered she, drily.

He looked at her inquiringly—she had puzzled him so those two days; for, with his usual quick perception, he saw that something was wrong, and possessing a great share of the inquiring mind of Adam (that being, in mankind, the high development of what is termed "curiosity" in the weaker descendants of Eve), he was anxious to learn the cause.

Eleanor shrunk from his scrutiny. She felt uneasy with him now,

though she could scarce define to herself why she did so.

"And what are you studying so attentively?" he resumed. "Oh!

poetry, I see. Are you fond of poetry?"

"Of some, not of all. No, I do not think mine is a highly poetic nature."

"How people differ! For my part, I like all poetry, good, bad, or indifferent—all alike to me. If it be good, I bow before it, and feel the nobler and the better for embodying myself therein; if bad, I make it subjective, and it serves as foundation to build countless thought-poetry of my own thereon."

"Ah!" said Eleanor, "your ideas are analogous to those of my cousin Ida's theory on the subject of poetry; she delights in every scrap of verse she meets with, from Shakspeare down, I verily believe, to the poet's corner

in a provincial newspaper!"

"I do not think I ever before met with one so susceptible to poetic influence as is your cousin; she culls wild, beautiful flowers of poesy everywhere, when others would pass them by as weeds; she harmonises, elevates, and idealises even the commonplace paths of every-day life. I wish she had accompanied you here."

Mr. Ashton was silent, and began to think. Eleanor looked-first at

her book, then at him.

"I wish you would make me your Father Confessor, Miss Stanley," said he, abruptly, at last, colouring a little as he caught Eleanor looking at him. "You had really better do so, I can give very good advice."

"Apropos to what?" she asked, laughing; "though I make no doubt you can, suppose we reverse it, and you tell me what you have all been doing since luncheon, en revanche for the interest you have evinced in my employments."

"Not reading poetry," he replied; "the elders went off with Lord Arlingford, to settle the affairs of the nation, or something equally abstruse to torment themselves about; and we went with Dennis Conway to his den, as he calls it. It is well worth the inspection, I can assure you; to the curious in such things it affords an ample field for observation. There we sat, a perfect colony of Turks."

"What-all smoking?"

"Yes, all."

"Mr. Conway his little back pipe?"

"Yes; but how did you know anything about the celebrated little

black pipe?"

"Oh, I met him the other day, when I was walking in the shrubbery, smoking it; and, indeed, one day he offered it to me for my Châtelaine, and told me, if I would wear it, it should be set in gold and

"No small proof of devotion on Conway's part, I can assure you, Miss Stanley, it is itself a gem in its way. I suppose, though, you do not

approve of smoking?"

"No, I am rather of King James's opinion on the subject; a very deteriorating amusement I deem it, 'men making chimneys of their mouths,' as that shrewd but not remarkably elegant monarch called it; though I confess I like it to be done, if done at all, in the perfection to which it is now carried, the height of the art, the little black pipe, there is no pretension about that, it so completely levels all distinction between nobility and mobility."

"You are severe upon us."

"Am I? Nay, if you do a thing, do it in character. Does Lord Ravenscroft smoke?"

"A little, and only a little, as Lady Grace says, 'soberly,' just as I do myself, simply because one 'must do in Turkey as the Turkeys do,' as another celebrated character once remarked. I left Ravenscroft deep in a discussion with Mr. Annesley, as learned as the one Lady Harriet began to-day; they were both swearing eternal friendship on the subject, or something like it."

Eleanor could not resist a smile at those two becoming friends.

"Mr. Annesley is a very old acquaintance of yours, is he not?" pursued her relentless persecutor.

"Yes, he used to live near Morley; as children, we used to see much of each other," she said, colouring.

"He seems very clever."

"Yes, he is very clever," said she, dropping her book, and stooping to

pick it up.

The door opened-"This way, Annesley, you will be quite quiet here, and can write your letter in peace. Oh! Miss Stanley, I beg you a thousand pardons," exclaimed Dennis Conway, as he caught sight of Eleanor. thought no one was here, and Mr. Annesley wished to write a letter."

"Pray do not mind me," said Eleanor, "I am going away."
"I beg," returned Dugald Annesley, "I may not disturb you."

They looked, poor souls—both so sadly embarrassed—so studiously away as they spoke, the one from the other.

"There, Annesley," said Mr. Conway, unknowingly coming to the rescue, "sit down, and write your letter, and get it over, or we shall never

have that game of billiards to-day;" and he busied himself about the writing-table, whilst Mr. Ashton remarked to Eleanor,

"What an odd thing it is, when you talk of people, how invariably it

brings them."

"Yes, as I once knew a young lady say, when a gentleman about whom she was talking came into the room, 'Quand on parle du soleil on en voit les rayons!"

"How pretty! that is quite a new version of the thing."

"Quite, is it not? You would have appreciated it more could you have seen 'le soleil!"

Dennis was moving restlessly about the room. "How it does rain," said he; for the five-hundredth time that observation had been made that day.

"Yes, it is the very picture of the rainy day, 'cold, and dark, and dreary,'" observed Mr. Ashton. "By-the-by, is Longfellow a poet you

approve, Miss Stanley?"

"Yes," said Eleanor, "for he is so completely the poet of energy, the one to make you trust hopefully in the future, to conquer difficulties and dangers, and to 'break the dark spell of tyrannical care;' from your very strife and suffering to rouse you only the more to noble deeds and high endeavour. Yes, Longfellow is a great favourite of mine."

Dugald sighed—those words recalled too forcibly, too painfully, the Eleanor of old days—the words which had kindled hopes and visioned happiness to his heart, how to fail! and she, too, sighed and looked down.

After she had spoken them—they struck Eleanor also.

"My thoughts still cling to the mouldering past, But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,"

sang Mr. Ashton, unconsciously continuing his thought, as he walked to the window.

Eleanor started, in her nervous, irritable frame of mind—it sounded like a prophet voice.

"It looks a little better now," said Mr. Ashton; "clearing a little."
"Does it?" asked Eleanor, eagerly, grasping at every word as

ominous.

"Yes, a gleam of sunshine actually; but there will be more rain—there are very heavy clouds coming up."

Eleanor looked round and sighed again. Very wild and unsettled

looked the sky, but it was clearing a little, certainly.

"Your letter seems interminable, Annesley," said Dennis Conway, "so I am off; when it is done, come and join me in the billiard-room."

"Here, I will come and play a rubber or so with you, Conway, if you

want some one," said Mr. Ashton, rising.

Eleanor looked up beseechingly; now the moment was come, she would have given worlds to detain them. But they went, and, as the door closed, how fluttered the poor trembling heart, which but a little time before felt so upheld, so strong, so injured in its pride! Oh! Dugald, think upon my counsels now, go not on in the headlong error of your way—

Oh! leave her not; or know, before thou goest, The heart that wronged thee so, but wrongs no more!

Eleanor bent her head over her book until the fair cheek almost rested

on the page. Dugald sat there motionless, partly turned from her, apparently writing his letter, yet watching her every movement, though she knew it not. There was such a dead, chill silence in the room, she could hear the very beating of her heart, which throbbed, oh, so wildly She sat there, each moment seeming hours, waiting, hoping, for him to speak. Should she speak first? she thought. Oh! no; with the shadow that had come between them, how could she break the silence? how could her voice exorcise the darkness? She ventured to look up at last, at him. Apparently he heeded her not, knew not that she was there; it was barbarous, agonising, this, worse than all to bear. What should she do? what could she say? It was so very cruel of him thus to be. Her mind seemed strangely active, too, in her despair; it was flowing back, revisioning the past, even whilst she knew that she was there, in that room—even whilst realising most painfully the actuality of the present, still peopling space with the spirit as well as with the retrovision of the days gone by. Yes, she was living also with as fresh reality, participating, even to the minutest degree, in the scenes of long ago. It is strange, this duality of existence, which all may have experienced, I believe, in moments when, in an excited frame of mind, the opportunity presents itself, without the power of action, and we have to wait, quiet, and in still life, under the strain and tension of the excitement; some magnetic influence then, "touching the electric chain, wherewith we are darkly bound," will often produce this simultaneous consciousness. And thus was Eleanor feeling now. Again did she seem to be once more with him beneath the hawthorn trees, in the days of her happy childhood, again each word uttered then distinctly was recalled; slow and clear they sounded, each one singly on her heart; as the welcome thunder-shower falls through the hot, sultry air, in the hour of noonday heat, upon the parched and weary earth, so they, though heavily, refreshingly fell. The noisome blight, and the travel-stains the world-dust had left there, vanished; and when the rain ceased to fall, the trembling drops still remained, in tearful dew, resting there, until the young love of her youth once more bloomed, fresh and fair to see. She felt now how much she loved him, as tenderly and truly, nay, more so than ever she had done before. How insignificant to the love he had once borne her were all the vanities, the gilding, and tinsel of that world at whose shrine she had sacrificed it so long. Oh! if he would but speak-but no word came; or if she could but think of anything to say to him-but not an idea presented itself; if she only knew what to call him-but-had she any right to say " Dugald" now? As these thoughts wandered through her mind, she was rapidly losing all selfcontrol. Clouds seemed to be upon her brain; she felt she must speak -she could bear it no more.

"Mr. Annesley," exclaimed she, rising-scarce knowing what she did

-imploringly.

"Miss Stanley," answered he, in measured accents, so bitterly, and oh! so cold, as he too rose and stood before the trembling girl, as if awaiting her commands.

Dugald was no model of perfection; he, too, had sat there, musing on the past; he, too, had sat there nourishing his pride. "Suspicions amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds, they ever fly by twilight," Lord Bacon observes; "in fearful natures they gain ground too fast, they have stings." And Dugald, brooding upon his wrongs, they grew

apace—all her faults and failings became magnified. Had he not heard her given to Mr. Ashton as well as Lord Ravenscroft? Had he not seen enough to justify his jealousy there? It confirmed him in his wilful determination that Eleanor should speak first; he further persuaded himself that he was acting the magnanimous part in repressing his feelings now. In the pride of Adam, blaming solely his Eve for the faults in which he equally participated and should have shared, he waited—forgetting that there are times when, however much a woman may feel herself to be in fault, however ready to seize the first opening and then bear all the blame, yet she dare not speak the first. And now Eleanor has said to him-"Mr. Annesley!"—He stood there feeling himself insulted and aggrieved. Oh! call her Eleanor—fold her to your heart—spurn her not away in her penitent silence, which should speak more eloquent to your soul than any words. Love and cherish her in the evil hour as in the good, and all may yet be well. He, to whom thou owest a hundred talents, thee, he would forgive. Shall the servant then be wrath with his fellowservant?-shall he who owes the hundred talents fail to excuse the debt of the hundred pence? But he only replied with bitter emphasis, "Miss Stanley!"

For one instant Eleanor stood there humbled; and then her pride rose hotly to her heart, withering and scorching all tenderness before it.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Annesley," she answered haughtily, though hurriedly; "I thought—but it matters not now. The heat of the room is so oppressive," continued she, somewhat incoherently, and moving towards the door.

He looked at her fixedly, as if seeking to read her inmost soul, as he opened it to let her pass; but she heeded him not now; but, drawing her graceful figure to its full height, she swept by him, and, "with

level fronting eyelids, passed out stately from the room."

Dugald closed the door. He went to the writing-table, and deliberately began to set it all in order, with a desperate pertinacity, as if his life depended upon the employment. When all was done, he next proceeded to the fire, and, leaning his head against the mantel-piece, crushed his letter in his hand; then tearing it into shreds, like a wilful child, he continued throwing the bits into the flame, watching it burning, muttering to himself all the while, and seeming to have a savage pleasure in venting his ire upon the innocent and unoffending paper. In the depths of his heart truly he blamed his folly now, and longed to recover the opportunity that was past for evermore; yet his spirit refused to ratify the acknowledgment even then; assuming a carelessness he did not feel, though endeavouring to persuade himself he felt it, that he was right yet, in still upholding his erring judgment, he went away, and whistling a lively air, he joined Dennis in the billiard-room.

And so they both persisted in the headlong course they had begun; both refusing to listen to conviction; both breaking the other's heart, and treating life, happiness, as a toy to be played with at will—a ball to be tossed carelessly from hand to hand, to be caught or relinquished as

chance might direct.

Dear reader,—you call this chapter absurd or unreal? Believe me, the whole tale is no mere creation of my brain. This very scene was in real life enacted once. It is a well established axiom that more strange than any fiction is the truth. My friend review the annals of your own past life alone, and will not they bear testimony to its being so?

ISABEL MILFORD.

AN OLD BACHELOR'S STORY.

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

IV.

ERNEST MONTAGUE was removed from the hotel to a quiet boardinghouse, where he was nursed, with the most gentle care, by an excellent good creature, no doubt; but she had an adopted daughter, a very Venus de Medecis of a French girl, and her broken English was lisped out so prettily and softly in that sick chamber, with now and then a winning phrase in her own mother tongue, that the patient's heart began to vibrate in a very critical manner, considering the deep devotion he had so lately promised to another. Pretty little Mimi was an orphan, her parents had died leaving her portionless, and her brother, who was considerably older than herself, and held a commission in the National Guards, had placed his sister with good Madame Brécher, who had become so much attached to la petite, that she could not be persuaded to part with her; and Mimi consented to remain, out of gratitude for the

motherly care she had ever bestowed upon her.

Mimi was educated at a good French boarding-school, and had learned all the accomplishments which add charms to natural beauty, and the freedom of manner which would have been thought rather too free in England, passed in her own country as but a delicate trait of nationalism. She did not fear small-pox—she had had it once, and it had left little or no trace of its ravages behind; and ably did she minister to the patient, for he recovered with a face as little marred as his loving friends could have wished; but he was long weak, and required to be nursed, and Mimi had little else to do than to attend upon him. He was so agreeable, she thought, and could talk to her in her own tongue almost as well as a Frenchman—and he was so handsome too, her little heart went pit-a-pat, and she would turn to her mirror and adjust her flaxen curls, and smile at her own beauty, well satisfied that the Englishman must admire; and she would pout and toss her pretty head, while wondering "who that 'Isabel' could be he used to rave about when in the delirium of fever?" and then she would stamp her little foot, and clench her tiny fist, exclaiming:

"Mon ami! he shall loofe me de best!"

Madame Brécher knew of Mimi's determination, and applauded it; and as she was fully persuaded that Montague was a young English millionaire, she considered him a fair prize for her petite belle. Well, well! truth must be told, man's heart is very susceptible, and Ernest's was no exception; he began to wish the pretty Mimi could be ever in his sight, that he could listen to that little prattle constantly—and then he asked his heart if that were faithlessness to Isabel? "Oh, no!" he bravely replied, mentally, while on his cheek a conscious blush shed its lustre, and he sighed. "Why does not Isabel write to me?-ah! Isabel, Isabel, you have forgotten me; while I -" what was he going to

say-a very pathetic lament was doubtless on his tongue that his own

constancy should be so unrivalled!

Ernest esteemed himself fortunate in having got rid of his tutor, and began to think his visit to France much more bearable without him; but his mother wrote in great anxiety for his health, and he was fain to confess his convalescence, and to announce his intention of proceeding at Still he lingered many days at Boulogne, and at length once to Paris. made his lamentation known to Madame Brécher that she was not keeping a boarding-house in Paris, where he was compelled to remove, and expressing his doubts as to the possibility of enduring life for even a short season without her tender care! The worthy woman immediately proposed removing thither for some months, and forthwith made arrangements for carrying out so kind an intention. Her landlord was about to distrain for rent, so she consented to walk out and leave him most of her valuables, and depart by train the following week for the metropolis, where she had a sister, who would gladly receive her, and any friend she might introduce. Ernest felt a little staggered at this proposition, and not quite liking the prospect of chaperoning madame, even though accompanied by Mimi, hastened his departure very ungallantly, only promising to see them immediately on their arrival in Paris.

Mimi was very indignant at his flight, but consoled herself with the determination to make his heart ache for it, and wrote to apprise her brother of the state of the case, and to request him to prepare for her reception as the future "miladi" of the sweet "milord." So promptly did Mimi act on this occasion, that an Englishman would have declared

her to be a decided character.

Ernest established himself very comfortably at Meurice's Hôtel, and scarce felt the loss of the facetious Madame Brécher, and while thus for some days absent from the fair Mimi, he had leisure to scrutinise the real state of his feelings, which he could scarcely do while in the presence of that lively coquette.

"Why had he ceased to write to Isabel?" Because she never once

replied to his first impassioned epistles.

"Why was Mimi so constantly in his thoughts?" Because she had nursed him with such sisterly care and kindness; he was quite sure it must be that he loved her as a sister—a dear sister. He missed her now very much, but that was natural; she had always anticipated his wishes, had flown to meet him whenever he entered the house, if he only left it for half an hour; and she was so anxious about his health, and so gentle and tender in her inquiries if she ever saw him look grave or sad; how frequently she had tried to dispel sad thoughts by her gay ballads, sang with such captivating grace—who could be insensible to such witchery? And, then, how often she had laid her little hand upon his arm, and looked into his eyes, as if she wished to see his very soul, while in soft, clear tones, she whispered-"Mon ami, mon cher ami, vous avez un chagrin secret!" and how could he reply—how had he replied? he was young—he was ingenuous—he was sincere; but those wicked little eyes did look so lovingly at him. Could he help saying something kind? Ah, Ernest! Ernest! you were a naughty boy, and you will live to pay dearly for your folly. But was not Isabel the idol of his heart? and was it possible to love two at once? Could he really dream of such a thing? No, no; he did flatter himself that Isabel was still beloved as ardently as ever; that Mimi was but a

plaything for the passing hour; but conscience whispered that little ladies' hearts were dangerous toys; and he began to think that Mimi's love was not of that fraternal character he wished to believe his own; then he was perplexed, troubled; and he wished himself back to Ramsgate. But his musings were one day interrupted by Monsieur le Capitaine, the brother of Mimi, who called to make his acquaintance, and treated him with such frank cordiality, that Ernest was soon as intimate with him as if he had known him for years; and monsieur was so useful in showing him the lions, and so indefatigable in his attendance, that Ernest had scarcely time to deliver the many letters of introduction he had brought with him from England to families of the first distinction. Monsieur le Capitaine had anecdotes to tell of nearly all these families, and such little tales did not at all prepossess Ernest in favour of the individuals whose acquaintance was to be made; and thus the week had passed that was to intervene ere Mimi arrived. Her affectionate brother led his bon ami Ernest to meet her at the railway station; and Mimi enacted so much joy at meeting both, that she seemed hardly to know whose arms to fly into first. This warm greeting rather vexed than pleased Ernest; he began to think it somewhat bold; but the next instant he was excusing it, in remembrance of the warm impulses she seemed ever actuated by. But Isabel's image, day after day, rose in lofty magnificence as an idol of perfection, as that of Mimi merely enchained his fancy like a dancing sunbeam, while his eye rested upon her beauty, and his ear was pleased by her gaiety; and yet she was a very dangerous rival for Isabel, more particularly as she was determined to be so; and her brother seemed to consider her affiancée to Ernest, which was very awkward, for he did not know how to undeceive him. In fact, Monsieur le Capitaine was a fiery Frenchman, and talked of bullets as though they had been sugar-plums, pistols as if harmless as pea-shooters, and men's brains as if as little valuable as rotten eggs! Now, Ernest had no inclination whatever to have the strength of his skull tested by the captain's bullets, though brave enough, no doubt, to meet the exigencies of the times!

V.

Anxiously as poor Isabel had sought an opportunity to peruse the paper put into her hand by the beggar-man, none offered; nor could she possibly venture to withdraw it from its hiding-place until the inmates of the convent had retired to rest. At last she found herself alone, but as all the dormitory lamps were extinguished, she feared the pale moonbeam which glimmered in at the small barred window would scarcely be sufficiently bright to enable her to read her letter; happily it was written in a plain legible hand, and, with some little difficulty, she deciphered its contents. It is almost needless to say, for probably the gentle reader has already determined, that this letter proved to be from "the old bachelor." Isabel read with eager and pleased surprise; a hope that he would prove a friend "good at need," immediately took possession of her mind, and her anticipations were not disappointed in finding that he had already planned measures for her escape, and offered to put her on board a steamer which would in a few days sail for the West Indies; he assured her of the utter impossibility of safety with her mother, so long as Father Donald was at hand to govern with despotic power, as there was no VOL. XXIII.

doubt he did; that he well knew she would be cloistered for life if she did not make her escape at once; that Lord C-had, in pure revenge, offered a large dowry to the nunnery, if they succeeded in making her take the black veil. This fact he had ascertained beyond doubt, though he could not give up his authority. Isabel needed not this information to inspire her with determined resolution to make her escape if she possibly could; but as she read the method suggested for the attempt, she almost laughed aloud, so ridiculous did it appear, and she crushed the paper in her hand despairingly, raising her eyes to the calm, blue sky; yet, as she watched the pale orb, gradually bursting from the passing clouds, she once more held up the paper for its light to fall upon the despised lines, while she re-read with more gravity the proposal; and then she thought, perhaps, after all, she had better follow the advice given—the writer was evidently not in jest. Well, then, she would resolve to undertake it. What?—absolutely to mesmerise the keeper of the keys of the private entrance! This person was Sister Louise, an old nervous woman, re-

markable only for her fractious perverseness.

Isabel was soon dressed, and ready for the undertaking; she heard the hour chime past midnight—the very right time, she thought, for nocturnal visitations—and smiling as she wrapped a white sheet around her, she crept quietly from her cell. She passed down a long dark passage, to the further end of the convent, where she knew Sister Louise slept; she had to pass the door of the stern abbess's apartment, and listened at the door to hear if she was sleeping: sonorous tones assured her of the She was just passing a small skylight, when she discerned the figure of a woman approaching. She trembled violently, and almost held her breath with fear, lest she should have been discovered; but in a moment her alarm was relieved by a shrill scream from the figure, which rushed by her in frantic haste, and Isabel felt assured she had only encountered a poor nun on a penitentiary excursion, to whom she had herself caused more alarm; and she again smiled at her own fears, and determined to be more bold in future, inwardly murmuring, "This is my only chance for escape from this loathsome place-kind Heaven speed At last she reached the door of Sister Louise's cell; there she paused, and considered the instructions she had received; it was the work of an instant, the next her hand was on the lock, and she entered with a dauntless though light step. The old nun slept soundly, but uneasily, and the pale light fell partially upon her hard-looking features. Isabel advanced, and stood beside the bed; Sister Louise stirred, but Isabel stood firm.

"If I flinch," thought she, "I am undone; the old woman is vindictive, and there is no knowing to what tortures I may be subjected." Stern resolve followed—if it were possible for so soft a nature to have

one stern feeling.

Fixing her eyes in a glassy stare, she riveted them upon the sleeper. She made the passes slowly and calmly; Louise sighed, opened her eyes, wildly staring at the living apparition, while horror was depicted in her face. She essayed to scream, but her tongue was powerless, and she continued staring as if bereft of reason. Isabel continued her fixed gaze, deliberately waving her hands with the slow movement of mesmeric power, until the poor nun gave a low hysteric sob, and fell back

on the pillow from which she had partially raised herself. Then Isabel started with alarm, and leant forward, with a feeling of remorse for what she had done, scarcely knowing whether to call for assistance or fly back to her cell—but the last words of her letter reassured her as they recurred to mind: "Fear not any hysterical symptoms, she will sleep the more soundly if she evince any; take the keys quickly, and hasten to me."

With trembling hands she raised the pillow and felt for the keys. She drew forth a large old-fashioned-looking pocket, fit for a Lady Douglas, and in another moment her hand had dived to the bottom, and brought up the desired treasure. She quickly replaced the pocket, without stopping to scrutinise its heterogeneous contents, and quitted the cell as quietly as she had entered, groping stealthily through the corridor. She had become so excited and nervous, that she scarce knew if she was going right until she came plump up against a great iron-bolted door; the violence of the concussion was not sufficient to hurt her, but it aroused her consciousness of the necessity of mental control. She found some difficulty in unlocking the door, for it was too dark to see the keys, but, after trying several unsuccessfully, she finally fitted the lock, and then, withdrawing the bolts, pulled it carefully open, but do what she could, the rusty old hinges would send forth a painful screech, which alarmed Isabel so much, that she let it slip from her fingers as she was in the act of closing it after her; it slammed with violence! Isabel started forward in terror, and finding herself at the top of a staircase, ran down so swiftly that her feet scarce touched the ground, expecting momentarily to be overtaken by some whom that loud report should have awakened, and carried back to captivity and remorseless tyranny. But happily her fears were groundless; the echo fell on drowsy ears, and passed for a terror of the night. At the bottom of the staircase she hastened along another smaller corridor and another barred door, then through a small court to an iron gateway; it was the private entrance, and for the superiors and priests alone. She paused, in dread foreboding, one moment—the next. the key was in the lock—the gate open—and Isabel was free!

The moon was shining gloriously bright, every cloud was dispelled, as if in triumph at her success and bravery! and, as the gate closed its spring-lock behind her so fast and surely, she clasped her hands in thankfulness, and at the retrospective glance she took thus hastily, the tear of gratitude was in the up-raised eye, while a smile lit her lovely features at the appearance she made in that white sheet, upon which the moonlight glittered dazzlingly. But the old bachelor was at hand; and, nothing daunted by her ghost-like appearance, he clasped her hands in his, and applauded her strength of mind. Above all, he praised her judicious addition to his instructions, assuring her that, doubtless, the flowing white robe had materially heightened her mesmeric power over her sleeping

gaoler.

THE HORRID CARPET-BAG.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

I.

Affairs that walk

(As they say spirits do) at midnight have
In them a wilder nature than the business
That seeks despatch by day.

SHAKSPEARE.

In "the very witching time of night," and in what is emphatically denominated "a bachelor's room," as an apology for everything that is scanty and uncomfortable, and which, according to the size of the mansion, or the number of persons packed in it, like Yarmouth bloaters in a barrel, slaves in a ship, or, what is even closer still, night lodgers in Foxand-Knott-court, usually ranges in dimensions from a commodious dog-kennel to the smallest of Christian dormitories, sat a young man, "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd," who, from his extreme agitation of manner and impatient consultation of his watch, was evidently on the eve of embarking in

an "enterprise of great pith and moment."

It would have perplexed the most astute physiologist to have decided, from his general appearance, whether the morale preponderated over the physique in his character or not, so exactly did his mind and person appear to conform to each other; neither, however, indicating superior mental powers, nor herculean corporeal strength; still, there was a most unmistakeable expression of benign reliance in his mild, handsome countenance, the rather receding forehead of which, being only partially shaded with that light wavy hair, whose silken softness infallibly implies the effeminate understanding and delicate constitution, while the smooth hectic cheek, slight elegant figure, and sickly whiteness of hand, add convincing proofs that he was not formed by nature to struggle with "outrageous fortune;" but, on the contrary, if allowed to follow his own inclinations, to glide calmly down the stream of life to the haven at its end of peace and tranquillity.

He was, in fact, what the casual observer would pronounce at once, very inoffensive and common-place; yet had he his salient points, his prominent features; and these consisted in a warm, affectionate disposition, an unbounded confidence in those whom he did love, a child-like simpleness, and a faith unshaken in the still existing goodness of man, fallen, as he was said to be, and an even stronger credence in the goodness of woman, whom he never could bring himself to believe did fall, in the most tremendous declension of innocence, but was still an angel of primitive purity and truth. Indeed, investing all around with the couleur de rose hue of his own self-satisfaction, he saw not the cold and everlasting snows of a chill and disappointing world lying beneath the glow of his own bright thoughts, for he loved, and he was loved, and how was it possible, then, for him not "to gild even the refined gold" of hope, and "add a

perfume to the violet" of promise?

The furniture in the above-mentioned bachelor's room was of the most

unostentatious description, consisting merely of absolute necessaries; such as a bed on an iron frame for one, two buff-painted cane-bottom chairs, chest of drawers, washhand-stand, and toilette-table to match, a narrow strip of carpet by the bedside, and a looking-glass, suspended against the wall near the window, as diminutive as that rare mirror exhibited at Holyrood Palace as the one in which the lovely Queen of Scots repaired those

fascinating smiles so fatal to so many.

On the bed lay, as if in contrast to this very médiocre ménage, a most plethoric-looking carpet-bag, rivalling in its apparent capability of holding an immensity, the world-wide celebrated one of Mr. W. S. Woodin, and which, literally crammed to repletion, resembled an over-gorged civic functionary, or one of those deplorably fat turtles which some recherché purveyor of aldermanic specialties displays to give an edge to blunted appetite, and compels humanity to exclaim, in the indignation of its shocked sensibilities, "Where are the boasted advocates of cruelty to animals now?"

On again consulting his watch, the young man, as if driven to extremities at finding how slowly time progressed, snuffed his one mould candle with a fierce desperation for him, placed it safely out of reach of the curtains, settled himself more at his ease on the bed, drew a letter from his coat-pocket, and after gazing on the address for some moments in vague and silent ecstasy, and then in the same enamoured manner at the broken seal, putting it artistically together to read over and over the oracular and flattering motto surrounding an exceedingly plump little heart, and which protested, as plain as motto could, the affecting part of its "Ne'er being glad, when thine is sad," with the exultation of a Malvolio, who did "know the sweet Roman hand," he unfolded the sibyline leaf to reperuse, and for the hundredth time, the precious contents, which ran thus, in really a running hand:

"MY DEAREST HORATIO, —How glad I am that you were named after England's greatest naval hero, because I fancy, dear, the name may inspire a corresponding bravery in you, when either called upon to defend your country or the fair; and, alas! how soon may your prowess be required for the latter, for I have made up my mind at last to fly with you. And, oh! the struggle I have had! oh, the rude combat which I have endured, alone, with only my love and my own strong will to sustain me! Yes! dear, dear, adored Horatio,

I loved, I love you, for this love have lost
State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own esteem,
And yet cannot regret what it has cost,
So dear is still the memory of that dream.

Ah, Byron! Byron! your romance has turned many a giddy head besides mine! Well may Addison say,

The woman who deliberates is lost.

But who can resist their destiny? Mine is to follow you whithersoever you may choose to lead me. Ah, tyrant! if, however, you think I have been too easily won,

I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay;

but if not, come with the expected signal, at three o'clock, for that is the

propitious hour for love's light wings to soar away to elysium; for, as Macnish, Dr. Young, Bellini, or some other celebrated sonnambulist declares, that those who can sleep, sleep the heaviest then—

Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care.

Ah me! I feel as if I should 'sleep no more,' as if this resolution had 'murdered sleep.' Be sure to be punctual, and do not bring a thing with you but money, as you know that with that we can easily purchase those necessaries which even a love so exalted as ours cannot dispense with, and luggage might create suspicion, and delay our departure; and, standing as I do on the tip-toe of expectation, could I endure, could you endure to have that ardour damped, that zeal chilled, by the frigid breath of expostulation? Oh, no, no, no—a thousand times, no!

The mind I sway by, and the heart I bear, Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Mine does a little though, dear, in spite of all my endeavours at fortitude, but I am confident yours will but become the more courageous as mine Then, the idea of the immense sensation which my abduction, as it will be considered, will occasion to-morrow morning, reconciles me to a regular good fright; the storming and threatening of papa, the tears and pleadings of mamma, the hypocritical sympathy of Bob (who rejoices secretly that I am gone), the envy of all my female friends, the rage and despair of my male ones, the indignation of your master. Oh! will not all this be delightful? I really feel quite excited, dear, as I picture the truly melodramatic scene at the breakfast-table when my absence is announced—the digestive bacon left to cool in unmerited neglect, the rolls disregarded, the eggs, but for Bob's sly tap, allowed to grow as hard as a stepmother's heart; and then, the simultaneous rush up into the poor deserted room, the letter seized, conspicuously stuck on the pincushion—such a letter, Horatio! full of heart-rending revelations of unconquerable affection, pathetic appeals for pardon, hints at a premature dissolution; all, all written with a trembling hand, a throbbing heart, and my long hair hanging down my back. Oh, Horatio! you should see that letter—this is nothing to it in a manner; but you will see it, for mamma is sure to keep it as a specimen of the extraordinary abilities of which she is so proud.

"And all this trouble, and anxiety, and distress, I am going to inflict on my family for your sake. Oh, Horatio! Horatio! most beloved Horatio! how will you ever return the alarming sacrifice? how you will have to dote and adore, to pet and flatter, or I shall never imagine that you were worth it; for you know that I do not want admirers—I only give you the preference over the legion who worship at my feet. In fact, I shudder at the effect which the step I am about to take will have on the most devoted of them. I do, indeed. Now, pray do not begin to grow jealous—and yet you must, as there is no real love without it; and less than I have admitted ought to drive you to the verge of suicide, for

Trifles, light as air,

Are, to the jealous, confirmation strong As proofs of holy writ.

Oh, Horatio!

What damn'd minutes tells he o'er, Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet madly loves. Ah! men do not love now as they did in the chivalrous days of the immortal bard of Avon!

"I must conclude now, dear, for if I once begin to fancy that such is the case, adieu to the delicious elopement, and all the glory and *éclat* resulting from having the very, very dearest wish of my heart gratified; and by the very, very dearest object of it!

"Au-revoir,
"Yours ever—yes, yours ever,
"Julia Morrisson.

"Morrisson for the last time, j'espere!

Thou knowst the mask of night is on my face; Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek

for that confession! But why should I feel shame for avowing the truth? I do not feel shame; I glory in acknowledging all I wish, hope, desire, expect of happiness from you! I am calm, composed, resigned; my hand no longer trembles, my heart no longer beats; I have gathered up my dishevelled tresses, I have braided them in those thick masses which you so much extol, over my now serene brow; and as becomes a strong-minded woman, am waiting for what may happen."

"Dear, dear Julia!" exclaimed Horatio, folding up the letter with a sort of reverence, "how can you think me worthy of so much love? Yet how inconsiderate you are, darling, to advise me to bring nothing but money, my very smallest of possessions! I cannot leave home for a month without a change, particularly my checks and stripes, so suitable for a wedding excursion; where could I get such trousers out of London? No, no, Julia dear, I am not going to disguise myself in some provincial misfits, I can tell you, so I shall take a carpet-bag, suspicion or no suspicion!

"As the time approaches, I declare I feel less and less inclination for this adventure. I know that it will be attended with considerable risk and difficulty; for it is not now as it used to be in the good old times of slow coaches, decrepit watchmen, and oil lamps—nous avons changé tout cela! Now, detectives are ever on the alert to arrest one's steps if a shade too fast—now, the electric telegraph is always ready to signal from station to station—and now, the glaring gas-flames at every corner to flash full on the face of the nocturnal peripatetic!

"Ah, if Julia had but allowed me, I would at once have demanded her of her father and mother, and either have been accepted or refused by them; much better to lose her in that honourable way than perhaps to be pursued by them as a thief, and lose her after all, and my character into the bargain! But she is so romantic and so clever, she quite overpowers my poor bit of common sense, and elope she will, so I have no alternative but to gratify her this time; but if ever I consent to run away with another young lady of seventeen, just fresh from a finishing school, may I be caught in the act and stopped. I had no idea they were so easy to go—why, she makes nothing of it in reality, although she does talk of the tremendous sacrifice, heart-tearing struggle, loss of fame, name, and reputation, with the remembrance of that strange inebriating dream; still I am positive, that in her very heart she delights in the danger to which she is exposing herself and me—actually calling it fun. Yes! she can call it fun to plunge her kind indulgent parents

into great and sudden sorrow on her account-she can call it fun to plunge mine into the same, by the probability of my being dismissed from the situation which cost them such labour and anxiety to obtain. Ah, Julia! you are too thoughtless! Good gracious! if I go on moralising in this deliberate manner I shall begin to fancy that I am not so deeply in love as I ought to be-that I am more calculated for an evening lecturer at a teetotal meeting, than for the husband of one of the most beautiful little creatures eyes ever beheld, and such a polka!

"I wish I had gone to bed for an hour or two, sitting alone is so melancholy. But, hark! it is striking the quarter to three at last! so now I

must be off in earnest!"

Saying which he seized the carpet-bag, put out the light, and crept cautiously down the stairs, which, for a wonder, did not creak, and then let himself out at the door, and stood, "alone in his glory," in the street.

II.

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst.—Macbeth.

Call up her father, Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight, Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves! Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags! Thieves! thieves! Othello.

IF it is difficult sometimes to say what a day may bring forth, it is equally so with a moment occasionally, for scarcely had Horatio West made one step in advance towards the residence of the fair and expectant Julia, and was mentally congratulating himself that thus far the course of true love did appear for once to be running smooth enough, when, lo! without the slightest premonition, he felt his arm roughly grasped, and, at the same time, saw the glare of a bull's-eye flashed into his indignant face, while a voice, dictatorial in its "little brief authority," exclaimed, "Hollo, young man, where are you a stealing to at this uncommon unaccountable hour?"

The stern interrogator was none other than the indefatigable and redoubtable Police-sergeant M 99, but where he had come from so inopportunely, and with his confounded lantern, our hero, for the life of him, could not conceive; he must have appeared from nowhere in particular,

like the small boy who darts forward so very promiscuously to hold the gentleman's "'oss," wherever that may chance to be.

However, he was sufficiently "up" in the genus detective to be fully aware that it would be useless to attempt, as in canny Scotland, to respond to one question by putting another, as the dignity of the aforesaid class was of too Spartan a character to calmly endure the coy dalliance of evasion. Besides, although ignorance might be bliss to the little Topsy, "who knew nothin' at all about nobody," and even pardonable in her, it was not the same in this almost "son of Anak," who yet affected an equally tantalising "non me recordo" oblivion of all past, present, and future. Still, the gathering scowl of impatience on the brow of the scrutinising official warned him that answer he must; so, summoning "his courage to the sticking-place," and yet determining "to draw it mildly," he replied, in a tone of deprecating humility, hoping to conciliate favour thereby, "I am not stealing away anywhere, sir." For he had heard how potent was that term of respect to those who were conscious that they had no legitimate right to it. But, alas! it proved no sop to our inflexible Cerberus, who was thrice-armed against flattery, and above the seductions of self-esteem; he therefore observed, in a bitterly sarcastic tone, "Ain't you, though!—what do you call it then? And whatever have you got in that there carpet-bag?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing! well, then, it's quite a curiosity, for I never saw an empty carpet-bag so like a full one in all my blessed life! So open it without more ado, or I must trouble you to go with me to the station."

"Oh, pray-pray do not detain me, I am in such a hurry."

"No doubt but you are ; people in your trade always are in a hurry."

"I'm not in trade."

"Well, well! profession then! even thieves expect politeness now."

"Do you take me for a thief?"

"Why, I rather think I do, and a precious 'cute one, too, with all your pretended greenness. I know you well; let me see! let me see!"—and again the lantern was elevated into Horatio's ingenuous countenance—"palish sallow complexion, sandy hair, a slight promise of whiskers to match, dull expression, and seedy figure."

"That's not a morsel like me."

"Yes it is; I've got it down in print: you are the identical young chap wot eased the old Somersetshire parson of his watch and dressing-case, last Thursday night, at the Paddington station, while pretending to help him take his luggage to a cab. Ha, ha! you did help him!"

"Me! me!—insolent fellow! why I can prove an alibi on the instant. The whole of last Thursday night I was copying poetry from Alfred Tennyson's 'Princess.' You know me, forsooth!—why, I am a

gentleman."

- "A gentleman!—well, that is rich! You a gentleman, and carrying a carpet-bag which would try a ticket-porter or a dray-horse! So, no more words; I'm an old bird, and quite familiar with such sort of gentlemen: so, just let us see how, in the confusion of your gentlemanly ideas, you have happened to mistake other people's things for your own."
- "I do assure you, on my honour, that you are labouring under a gross delusion respecting my identity. I am a gentleman; every article in this confounded carpet-bag belongs to myself. So let me proceed. I really am not the character you take me for."

"What character are you playing now, then? What are you up to,

if not to get rid of swag?"

"Why, going to carry off a young lady."

"That's a felony according to law, so I must still take you into custody."

"But she is waiting for me."

"We will call for her together then; the more the merrier: so, who is she, and whereabouts does she live?"

" Excuse me there-

The lady of my love I will not name."

"But you must though, and your own too, or I shall find a way to make you;" and he lifted his rattle, as if to spring it.

"Hold! hold! for pity's sake, hold! and I will tell you all. My name is Horatio West. I am articled to old Mr. Simpson."

" And the lady's?"

"Oh! spare hers—here is five shillings."

"Do you think a paltry five shillings would bribe me? The lady's name, I say, or——" And again the dread-inspiring rattle was raised.

"Well, then—but pray keep it secret—it is Miss Julia Morrisson."

"Oh, oh !-here's a pretty go !-why, she's a fortune." "Oh, it's not for that, indeed. I am not so mercenary."

"In course you ain't. All for love! all for love! But, howsomever,

I must prove the truth of all this by going to Mr. Morrisson's."

"If you do, you will spoil the whole affair. Rather than such a discovery, I will give up the scheme."

"What! now your carpet-bag is already so nicely packed?"

"Curse the carpet-bag!"

"It's no manner of use being so violent; come along quietly, for you know that you must obey my orders."

"Is there no alternative?"

"None, except the station; so let us be moving. It's only a stone's throw from here—quite neighbourly-like." Saying which, he began to drag the reluctant Horatio up the street, while he began to drag the

odious carpet-bag along, as well.

On reaching the comfortable four-story mansion of Mr. Morrisson, and on looking up and down its imposingly fresh stuccoed façade, not a sign was visible of any human being watching and waiting within-all was still, profoundly still-all was dark, profoundly dark-and, in consequence thereof, the scarcely-subsided suspicions of the midnight Argus were again awakened, and tightening his grasp of Horatio with one hand, he applied the other with even more vigour to the door-bell.

This "tintinnabulary clatter" not being exactly the preconcerted signal agreed upon between her and her lover, threw Julia into a state of the utmost trepidation and alarm; yet she durst not stir from her room to investigate the cause of it, nor even approach her window, and could only hope that it proceeded from one of those witless frolics so much the mode amongst the young would-be esprits forts, who consider it a real jest to molest the earnest of the more sober-minded part of her gracious Majesty's highly-favoured and leal subjects, by endeavouring to

break an inoffensive bell-wire.

To say that she listened breathlessly for its effects on the other inmates of the house, would but feebly describe the sort of gasping eagerness with which she bent her ear to catch the slightest indications of any one being disturbed by it except herself. But, as she had stated to Horatio, that all who could sleep would be asleep at that hour, and so sound was that slumber, that even the policeman, accustomed as he was to call the maids up on chimney-sweeping mornings, and travellers for early trains, he was amazed at the tenacity with which Morpheus held dominion over the senses, which he had indeed "steeped in forgetfulness;" so, finding the bell an utter failure, "he lifted up the knocker, and gave a knock so long and loud it might have waked the dead;" and it did, at last, wake the slumberers who wore the silent semblance of the dead; and, starting up in the most horrible consternation, and too confused to arrange their thoughts, both Mr. and Mrs. Morrisson exclaimed, simultaneously—

"Whatever can that noise mean?"

"Oh, Robert! the house must be on fire! Oh, gracious! Hark! what a crackling of wood! Oh, Robert! I actually feel the heat ascending through the floor." And here Mrs. Morrisson twined her arms so convulsively round her husband as to threaten him with instant suffocation.

"Nonsense, Lizzy, nonsense," he replied, endeavouring to allay her terrors, though his own were increasing—" nonsense, love; it is no such

thing."

"Oh, it is, it is; we shall all be burnt in our beds, Robert! Oh, what a destruction of good property, and we not insured! Ah! if you had only taken my advice, and bought that new patent fire-escape, we might have saved our lives, and a remnant at least of our valuables; but, penny-wise and pound-foolish, as all men are, you would not do as I wished you, as you never will."

"Well, it's too late to rectify that now; so do let me get out of bed,

and see what really is the matter."

"Oh, I won't be left alone, Robert, to be murdered."

"Well, go with me, then."

"Oh, I dare not. Where can Bob be? surely he is not trying to knock us up. Yet, if he was at home, this must wake him."

"Let me look out of the window, Lizzy, and see."

"What! to be shot down like a sparrow for a pudding? Never! recollect how desperate robbers are."

"Robbers! why, you said it was a fire just now. Do, pray, be con-

sistent."

"Who can be consistent, when their teeth are chattering ready to fall out of their heads with fright? but you have no pity——"

"Mother! mother!" cried Bob outside the door, "are you and fa-

ther awake?"

"Oh, my dear boy, I think we are! What a relief it is to hear your voice. How many are there, Bob?"

"How many what?"

"Thieves-burglars-housebreakers-all got in at the dining-room window."

"Oh, no; there's not a soul inside yet. And only let them try that dodge, mother, that's all. I've got my revolver, with all seven barrels at half-cock; so they must be cunning to escape a peppering from some of them."

"Well, if they are not in the house, I will go to poor Julia, who must be half dead with terror, being by herself; while you and your father

go and capture the villains."

Saying which, Mrs. Morrisson, in flannel gown and fur-trimmed slippers, ventured forth, and under the protection of "Colt's infallible thief-annihilator," was safely conducted to the sleeping apartment of her daughter; while her husband and son, reinforced by one man and three maid-servants, valiantly went below to face the danger.

Mrs. Morrisson was, in the strongest sense of the word—that is, the most faulty—a doting and adoring mother. Julia was her only daughter—Julia was beautiful—Julia was accomplished; and to be as-

sured that Julia was happy, ensured her own felicity. Often and often, when half undressed, had she stolen to the bedside of her darling, as some fond and holy impulse moved her heart, to see if she was asleep-to be thankful that she was asleep—to kiss her softly—to bless her softly—to creep away softly-and to lie down softly by her husband, the father of that precious girl, at peace with heaven and earth. But Mrs. Morrisson was still a woman, and, consequently, a little unreasonable; and she was, therefore, not only surprised, but, in fact, rather disgusted, to find her idolised Julia in a most profound and unsympathising slumber. For, of course, Mrs. Morrisson, being now absolutely wide awake, she considered it almost a crime that her daughter should not be awake too from mere Besides, Mrs. Morrisson was timid and lonely—Mrs. Morrisson was alarmed and agitated—and she wanted companionship and consolation; and although she had only half an hour before been in as sound a sleep as the lovely and insensible culprit whom she was contemplating with a sort of anathematising astonishment, and although it would have smote her very heart to have disturbed her at any less portentous time, she now remorselessly shook her, called upon her with a shrieking violence, and resorted to every known and unknown measure to rouse her to consciousness and commiseration. But Julia was, extraordinary as it may appear under such circumstances, most difficult to awaken; so much so, indeed, that her mother began to doubt of her really possessing that exquisite sensibility of which she made such an affecting and desolating But, as the drop of water in time wears away the hardest stone, so did Mrs. Morrisson, by incessant nudges and pathetic supplications, at length quicken her daughter's dormant faculties to a fine apprehensiveness.

"Oh, dear mamma!" she exclaimed, rubbing her eyes, and yawning most infectiously, "what is the matter? Are you ill? or papa, or Bob,

"Why! is it possible that you have heard nothing of the dreadful noise, Julia?"

"No! What noise, mamma?"

"Thieves, I fancy. But, hark! they are coming this way! What a clatter! Depend upon it the criminals are caught."

"Oh, mamma, how terrifying! I never saw a real burglar—never!"
"Well, if I am not mistaken, you will see one now, if not a dozen."

And before Julia could utter more than the pretty expletive of "Oh my!" into her room, by his coat collar, was ignominiously dragged Horatio West, still nervously keeping possession of his luckless carpetbag; the triumphant Bob, with his revolver, still at half-cock, keeping as tenaciously hold of him, followed by Mr. Morrisson, senior, armed with his militia sword, the man and maids with what first conveniently came to hand, and the policeman with his formidable truncheon.

came to hand, and the policeman with his formidable truncheon.

"Why, as I live," cried Mrs. Morrisson, "it's old Mr. Simpson's articled clerk, Horatio West! Gracious me, how I pity his parents! To take to such ways! What has the villain stolen, Bob?—his carpet-

bag is quite crammed."

"He swears that he has stolen nothing yet, mother; but confesses

that he came for your dearest treasure."

"What! my gold repeater, which was my mother's—which was her mother's? Oh, the unnatural wretch!"

"No, not the watch, mother—not the watch; but your one little ewe lamb there."

"What, Julia?—your sister Julia? Why, Julia, do you know the monster, my dear? But it's all a subterfuge that, Bob, to get off easy,

for I found the poor little thing as fast as a church."

"Not so fast, perhaps, Lizzy, as the church would soon have made her," interposed Mr. Morrisson, with a satisfied laugh at his own jest. But never did he venture on more dangerous ground, for Mrs. Morrisson was in no mood, with her maternal feelings ruffled all the wrong way, to bear his pointless joke, and she therefore sharply reproved him for his indelicate brutality; and then, turning again to Bob, observed,

"That if she thought Julia was a confederate-"

"Why, mother, I am sure she is; the fellow has admitted it—her sleep was all sham. She was ready prepared for him, I am convinced."

"But, Bob," again interfered Mr. Morrisson, "there was no necessity for such a foolish step, for I, for one, have no objection to the young

man, if her heart is set upon him."

"Oh, papa! oh, dear, dear papa!" cried Julia, springing out of bed, and flinging her arms round his neck, with a total disregard of the neat lavender-jean boots, tipped with black patent leather, which this sudden burst of filial emotion revealed, peering below the long night-dress which she had hastily slipped on over her travelling visite.

"There! I told you so, mother; she is dressed, ready for the start!" cried Bob, in that tone of vociferous exultation which a rather coarseminded man cannot suppress, who, having been subjected to the mortification of having his veracity called in question, finds his assertion borne

out by subsequent facts.

"Oh, Julia, Julia! and have you been able to make up your mind to quit such a mother as I have ever been to you?" said Mrs. Morrisson, in a tone of tender reproach. "Had you no pity for me? no regret for me? no compunction for the shame and sorrow into which your flight would have precipitated us all? We, so highly respectable!—we, so highly respected! Ah, Julia, Julia! you would soon have repented of your rashness."

"Don't blame the innocent darling, Lizzy; see how you are making her cry. Turn your anger on the young man who could persuade our

hitherto gentle and dutiful child to forget her parents for him."

"Oh, papa! he did not persuade me. Horatio was quite against an elopement; only I so longed for the éclat which it would lend to our marriage. I never thought of anything more serious, indeed, papa. And if he had only come without that detestable carpet-bag——"

"You would have, ere this, been on the road to ruin. What an escape you have had! how truly providential it was that Mr. West did persevere

in taking a carpet-bag with him."

"Only my 'checks' and 'stripes,'" faultered out Horatio, speaking for the first time.

"Never mind the contents! never mind the contents, Mr. West. They have preserved the honour of our child, for which I shall ever be most devoutly grateful."

"Ah, papa! but they have also destroyed the dream of my heart!" cried Julia, in the really melodramatic tone of a Lydia Languish; "I shall not be banished now from home and kindness; I shall not now be

brought back in tears and repentance to be forgiven; I shall not have to kneel down now with Horatio, with our united hands convulsively clasped together, and lifted up imploringly to deprecate your anger and awaken your mercy, while my disordered hair sweeps the very ground to

dry my fast-falling tears."

"Well, kneel down now instead, both of you kneel down; let us all kneel down, and thank the Almighty that this cup of bitterness hath passed from us. Come, Bob, come! do not be implacable! Recollect, she is your sister after all—your only sister, although you are so jealous of our fondness for her; so bend that stubborn knee among us, my dear son. See, your mother is actually kneeling between the lovers, holding a hand of each; so do you no longer bear any animosity towards them."

"I have no animosity, father, only I know this, that if I had thought of doing anything half as bad as Julia meant to do, it would have been a precious long while before you would all have knelt down to thank God for my escape."

"Nonsense, Bob, nonsense! why you are worse than the brother of

the Prodigal, whose pardon so excited his indignation."

"Well, father, here I am on my knees to please you, although the

truth is the truth."

"Then join with us heart and soul in offering up our gratitude to Heaven that your thoughtless sister will only go from the arms of her parents to those of a husband's, without the stain which an elopement for

ever leaves on the reputation of a woman."

"Well, then, if you do mean them to be married out and out, father, I suppose opposition is of no further avail; and, in accordance with the taste of the day, we had better form a coalition at once," observed Bob, carefully uncocking his revolver, and extending his hand amicably to Horatio, who shook it with deep earnestness, and he then kissed his mother and sister, and was proceeding with the same friendly tokens of unanimous reconciliation to the maids, but was checked in the exuberance of his genial and fraternising feeling, by his father replying gravely,

"After this exposure, my son, the sooner the marriage ceremony is performed the more creditable it will be for us all; for rely upon it, with

all our caution, the adventure of the carpet-bag will transpire."

"Ah, that horrid carpet-bag!" sighed Julia, "it has spoiled the

" Oh no, dearest," whispered Horatio, now fairly releasing his hand

from it for a different employment; "it has only turned it into a much sweeter reality."

Julia's response was inaudible, being stifled in the collar of Horatio's coat. "You see," he continued, addressing Police-sergeant M 99, gaining courage so to do from the favourable aspect of affairs, and also from a slight pressure from without, granted him in the most unpremeditated manner by Julia—"you see," he repeated, tauntingly, "that you were mistaken in my identity—that my hair is not sandy, nor did I ease the old Somersetshire parson of the articles which you charged me with doing in so purely an accidental a manner—that I am, in fact, what I described myself to be from the first—a gentleman."

"That does not follow by no manner of means; you may not be a thief, that is very possible, but I am sure you are no gentleman, as a real gentleman never yet offered a beggarly five shillings to get clear of a

case of suspicion like yours."

"Oh, no; I see exactly your standard of a real gentleman," cried Mr. Morrisson, slipping a couple of sovereigns into the immaculate functionary's hand. "Now deal mildly with this inconsiderate transaction, there's a good fellow."

"La, sir, never fear; no living soul will ever hear a word from me

about the young gentleman, nor his carpet-bag neither."

"Well, come, that will be discreet. So now go below with John Thomas Bradley, and have a glass of warm brandy-and-water before you resume your beat, for it is a nasty raw morning for you"—and here Mr. Morrisson got up a most encouraging impromptu shiver—" and John Thomas," he added, sharply, "be sure you mix it as you like it yourself—stiffish. By-the-by, do you drink it sweet?"

"Not particular for that, sir," replied the gratified policeman, already feeling, by anticipation, the reviving stimulant circulating through his slightly stagnant veins—"not the least particular as is about that, sir."

"And, Susan," continued Mr. Morrisson, who was now all activity, "do you and the other girls get the breakfast ready as fast as you can, for of course no one will think of returning to bed; for, bless me, if daylight is not shining through the chinks of the shutters! And Julia, dear, join us as soon as you can, to make Mr. West feel more at home like, for, after breakfast, he and I must be off to Mr. Simpson to explain this little matter, or the testy old gentleman will be for cancelling his indentures. Come, Bob, come; let us leave the ladies to arrange their toilettes; your mother's, in particular, requires that, for she looks now, in that blanket, like the favourite squaw of a Chippewa Indian chief."

"Well, I never!" exclaimed Mrs. Morrisson, as her husband, after this audacious sally, hurried out of the room, followed by the two giggling young men; "why, Julia, he is evidently as pleased as Punch to get rid of you! I am sure, dear, you must consider his levity quite brutal at such an affecting moment. Ah! I feel dull enough, darling, and it will be a day to mark with a black stone for me when you do become Mrs.

Horatio West."

"Dear mamma, you need not so register it, for it will make no difference between us! I shall love you all the same. You know the old proverb:

A son's a son, till he gets him a wife, But a daughter's a daughter throughout all her life.

And I am certain, dear, sweet, kind mamma, that I shall not prove the exception to it."

"Oh! pray don't coax and fondle, and look so pretty, Julia, or I shall regret you more and more."

"Well, but, mamma, you married, you know—you left a fond mother, you know, for you have her gold repeater still."

"Ah! that is very true, Julia; I was giddy then."

"And I am giddy now, mamma;" and Julia, with a kiss and a smile, tripped gaily to the looking-glass, and let down the wealth of her wonderous hair to arrange it nicely, while Mrs. Morrisson, with the majesty of an offended Siddons at the exuberance of her daughter's spirits, flung aside the blanket and strode off to her own room, mentally resolving to put on her very best front, although it was neither Sunday nor saint's day, but only out of a most amiable feeling of spite.

Mr. Simpson had no objection in the world to Mr. Horatio West becoming the caro sposo of Miss Julia Morrisson; promising to retain him in his situation, to prepare him for ultimately taking his seat on the woolsack, and laughing heartily at the contretemps of the carpet-bag, and congratulating his articled clerk at the fortunate dénouement of his projected elopement. Mr. and Mrs. West, père et mère, had no objection to their portionless son (one of nine little olive branches) becoming the husband of the wealthy Miss Julia Morrisson, admitting strictly entre famille seulement, that Horatio was a very lucky fellow. Not one cousin, even to the fifth remove, had any objection to the union in agitation; and as Mr. Morrisson undertook to find all the money for all the expenses attendant thereon, and was, moreover, exceedingly liberal to all Horatio's family connexions, whose name, for the nonce, became legion, he had his own way entirely, and although much delighted at this freedom of action, he still marvelled at the humility which allowed him such independencemais l'argent! l'argent! when profusely expended on others, can produce even more signal miracles than suffering a rich man to do, for once, what he likes with his own!

Although no doubt Police-sergeant M 99 did observe an inviolable secrecy respecting Horatio and his carpet-bag, it somehow or other got wind; for, on the morning of his marriage, and when with a heart swelling with exultation, and a step too light to wear out the not everlasting stones of the great metropolis—when, in fact, as a man says at a tedious public dinner, "this is the proudest moment of my life," he was leading his really beautiful bride from St. Pancras Church, followed by a gay and gorgeous train of wedding guests, and when he did not even dream of such an attack, he felt a sudden jerk at one of the tails of his coat, and on looking round to ascertain the cause of this unceremonious application of another's digits to that part of his irreproachable nuptial costume, he beheld an arch young gamin—a real incarnation of mischief and dirty rags—who inquired, with an affected and highly grotesque interest, "Why he neither wore his checks nor stripes!" and strongly recommending him "not to forget to take his carpet-bag along with him on his wedding tour."

"Confound the carpet-bag!" exclaimed Horatio, stung to death by the loud laugh of the assembled and pitiless oi polloi—"confound the carpet-bag, Julia; I wish it was at the bottom of the Red Sea with Pharaoh and all his hosts."

"Do not swear so, dear—pray do not; you have sworn enough already for one day, I am sure," replied Mrs. Horatio West, significantly—"more oaths than you will keep, perhaps."

"Confound the carpet-bag!" again muttered her husband—"confound it, I still say."

"Well, well!" murmured Julia, sotto voce, "this is the first day of our marriage, and, therefore, Horatio is justly entitled to the last word; but presently I shall take the reins of government into my own hands, and then, nous verrons, nous verrons, who will have it?" Saying which, she

tossed her ringlets and the carpet-bag to the winds, and tripped daintily towards the carriage, on her pretty little feet, bien chausséed—equally conquering her husband's irritation and the malice of the "rabble" by the irresistible power of her beauty and her coquetry.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

IX.

THE rich changer's ready and cheerful consent to his daughter's marriage with one so utterly unprovided with the gifts of fortune as himself, was a matter of no small surprise to the young scrivener; for, though Dame Flamel, with a mother's partiality, discovered in her son's merits ample indemnification for his pecuniary deficiencies, Nicholas could not but entertain some modest misgivings on this head. He held on the following morning a long conversation with his future father-inlaw, in which the propriety of acceding to the mysterious vintner's proposals was quite as much and warmly discussed as the approaching nuptials. And his straightforward, though timid remarks upon his own poverty, being met by an abundance of obscure hints, knowing smiles, and allegorical metaphors, all tending to insinuate that if he were not in actual possession of wealth he had but to put forth his hand and grasp it, he began to suspect that Blanchard was himself involved in those schemes which he seemed to hold out to him as a sure and safe road to fortune. This not only quietened all Nicholas's scruples, but raised his hopes; and he impatiently looked forward to the last day of carnival, whose close was to bring about the beginning of his adventure.

It came at last. There was nothing, certainly, to excite either curiosity or wonder in the very natural fancy which a young man of Nicholas's age might take to an evening walk on a holiday. In most families such a circumstance would have passed unnoticed; but the lone widow's maternal anxiety was roused by the most trivial incident; she could not help inquiring why he went out so late, and his reluctant, unsatisfactory answer gave her ample food for thought as he wended his

way through the crowded streets.

This being the last day granted to pleasure, all those who had been tardy in enjoying, or were desirous of a farewell taste of it, redoubled their eagerness in its pursuit; and to Nicholas the effusion of popular joy sounded clamorous and discordant; it disturbed the course of his own humour. Threading his way with difficulty through the crowd, which was so great that he felt some anxiety lest he should miss his expected guides, he made with what haste he could for the place outside the gates, where he had agreed to tarry for further directions. Here he found two persons, obviously on the look out for him, one of whom, advancing as he approached, inquired hastily, and with a meaning look, the name of the nearest tavern.

"The Sun and Moon," answered Nicholas, as he had been instructed. Scarcely were the words uttered when he was gagged, blindfolded, and pinioned; a rider's cloak was flung over his head and person, a vol. XXIII.

powerful arm raised him as though he had been an infant, and threw him across a horse; some one sprang into the saddle, and, holding him with

a firm hand, spurred the animal furiously onwards.

Although half choked, wholly blinded, and mounted for the first time in his life, and that not in the most convenient posture, Flamel's consciousness did not fail him. He noted with dread that the rider, who held him with so tight a grasp, was presently joined by another; and though they spoke not yet, their even pace showed that they purposely kept abreast of each other. He had now no doubt as to the real character of his captors—he was the victim of some deep plot of the Templar against his life or liberty. The thought was agony. If he should never return, what would be the fate of his widowed mother and orphan cousin—what their anguish, and that of the gentle Pernelle—what their surmises? He wondered at the simplicity which had led him into the trap, however artfully baited, and still more at the apparent connivance of the changer; and giving himself up for lost, he filled up with intermitting recitals of Aves and Credos the time that elapsed before his ride, and, as he conceived, his life were to terminate together.

Lifted from the horse, and dragged forward with what speed his stumbling admitted of, the serivener, breathless and trembling from his unaccustomed exertions, proceeded along, as it seemed to him, interminable narrow passages, was compelled to ascend winding staircases until his senses became well-nigh bewildered, and finally ushered into what, from the nature of the flooring, he conjectured to be a chamber of some sort or other, when cloak, bandages, and bonds were removed as rapidly as they had been cast upon him, and he was free to gaze around.

The room in which he stood was of lofty proportions, and circular, as though forming the interior of a tower. The spare evening light streamed through narrow apertures pierced so high as to lead to the supposition that the original floor of division had been removed; but this could not be ascertained, for the stone walls were hung round with costly hangings of foreign, and to Nicholas unknown, texture. Instead of the oaken benches in general use in those days, and whose more or less elaborate carving alone determined their merits, soft swelling cushions of the richest tints and stuffs were ranged in heaps round the chamber, forming a ring of low settees, on which several youths were reclining in every variety of the lounging attitude; some eating comfits, at that time an article of such luxury that they were seldom seen but at royal tables, and others voluptuously inhaling the perfume emitted from an elegant urn on a tripod in the middle of the floor, the carpeting of which was of skins obviously the spoils of Eastern hunts.

But though the decorations of the room were so new to Nicholas's bewildered gaze, not so the dark countenances and white robes of its tenants, among whom the well-remembered and striking person of

D'Aulnoy stood prominent.

There was, however, nothing threatening in their aspect, and least of all in that of D'Aulnoy, whose handsome countenance even wore a smile; and yet Nicholas felt more than ever convinced that he was lost in finding himself in the hands of those whom he held to be his worst, indeed his only enemies. But before his fears could assume any distinct form, Almeric was at his side addressing him in tones of friendly recognition.

" How fares it with you, Sir Scrivener? What !-- is the pleasure of this meeting all on my side? But no wonder, you have been roughly used, I see. Come this way, and raise your spirits with a cup of wine."

So saying he led the ill-assured Nicholas into a small adjoining closet constructed in the thickness of the wall, as bare as the other room was luxuriously decorated. Here, whilst a frère servant, evidently stationed on the watch, poured out some wine into a rich goblet, D'Aulnoy whis-

pered to the scrivener:

"By my troth, I'm right sorry to see you in this place. I bade that dog Canches meddle no more with you. I now know why he skulked off so quickly after I had recognised him under his tow wig and vintner's badge; had I guessed what he was about, even the carnival should not have saved his old bones. I wonder at his audacity in daring to trifle with me! But since you are here, and have been seen by the rest, there is no help for it-you must even let yourself float with the current. If you oblige us, you will not find us ungrateful; if otherwise, I could not screen you from the consequences."

Nicholas was no less surprised than pleased at discovering a friend in so unexpected a quarter; and he began to comprehend that, for the time being at least, the Templars contemplated making him their tool rather than their victim. Still, even this view of the case was dispiriting enough, and he heartily cursed his unlucky stars for having led him into a scrape, into which of his own free will he was so little likely to have

thrust himself.

On re-entering the larger chamber, they found its occupants gathered round the tripod, and engaged in what seemed, from the eagerness of their gestures, an earnest discussion, but which abruptly terminated on the entrance of D'Aulnoy and the scrivener.

"Shall this neophyte undergo no ordeal?" said a tall and very striking personage to Almeric, in a tone of command quite as much as of

inquiry.

"His unwonted exertions, and my visit a short time since, have been ordeal enough for the nonce," answered Almeric. "Besides, Flexian, I will answer for this youth's discretion and honesty."

"He who is smitten with the roe is likely enough to spare the hart,"

observed Flexian, suspiciously.

"My private motives for taking the scrivener under my especial protection are immaterial; at any rate I shall not suffer them to be questioned even by the commander of Montfaucon," replied Almeric, with hauteur. gint :

"Well, well; hot-headed boys must have their own way-especially when one can't prevent them; and so all respect to the youth for thy sake, Almeric, and for the sake of his pretty cousin's bright eyes. By my spurs!" continued Flexian, drawing Almeric aside, "they are far too bright for a poor Christian scriveners's hovel—they are worthy a Turk's harem or a Templar's tent at the very least-pity she is of such low

"All are not like Esquin de Flexian," retorted the younger knight, "who can fly at none but a lofty quarry."

"True, Almeric; but though the prey is nobler and more gay of

plumage, I doubt if it be so safe," rejoined the prior of Montfaucon, with a thoughtful brow.

"Then why pursue it with such ardour?"

"By Bafomet! I think the peril has more charm for me than aught else in the venture. For ever since that fatal interview, a busy demon hath been at work within my breast. I feel restless, impatient-this can't be love, thou knowest, the very idea were too preposterous! unless, indeed, it be love of adventure-of danger for its own sake. I now see that, for one who aspires not after high hazard, thou wert wise in comporting thee as thou didst beneath the battery of those bright eyes, though then I thought thee the veriest dullard in Christendom; for, by my patron saint, the youngest and fairest of those peerless dames seemed not indisposed to distinguish thee. Now confess, Almeric, it was fear of the consequences to thy brothers or thyself that made thee so much resemble the graven image of St. Bernard over the grand master's portal?"

"Not fear alone," replied D'Aulnoy; "but there is a boldness which is

scarce seemly."

"What! when the fair enemy herself oversteps the bounds of form? Would you have a gallant knight recede before a fair challenge? Besides, thou knowest I had no choice in this matter. Why, man, were not thou and I, whilst quietly enjoying an evening walk in the palace gardens, commanded—ay, commanded is the word—by thy two malapert brothers to adjourn to the private walk beneath the palace? The bidding thus transmitted no one might question in that place; of course we And, after all, what took place? a courtly presentation—a few pleasantries, during which thou stoodest like a sentry on guard against alarm—a hurried adieu, and all was over." Flexian paused a moment, and knit his brows-"Ay," he continued, somewhat bitterly, "all was over for them, I doubt not; they thought no more of the hour's frolic when the hour was past; but I-it matters not; and yet, how must all this end? Thou art right, Almeric; after all, an obscure affair, as with this damsel of thine, is all pleasure and no risk."

"To me, perhaps—but to her," said Almeric, thoughtfully.
"To her!" repeated the commander, with an unfeigned start of sur-

prise; "and who the devil cares for her?"

Almeric made no reply; but he felt a keener sense than he had yet experienced of the corrupting influence of pleasure, when that alone has become the aim of life, and of the cruel egotism with which it incrusts the hearts of its votaries, converting into a fossil fragment what once belonged to humanity. Younger than Flexian by full ten years, his spirit, still fresh, revolted from the hardness of his companion's, and abruptly breaking off, he exclaimed:

"Why tarries the old Jew so long? Can any harm have befallen

"He'll never trust himself to anything steadier than his own trembling shanks; that is the only cause of delay, you may be certain," said one of the young knights.

"Come," said Flexian, "to while away time until he make his appearance, let Hughes de Fravaux tell us some of his wondrous adventures in the East—the more wonderful that we know them to be strictly true. This honest burgher need not be excluded from the entertainment; but as the use of cushions must be very unfamiliar to him, he may even take his seat on the floor."

"Nay, nay, messires," anxiously interposed Almeric, "for the Virgin's sake let us remember, if indeed we have a shadow of sense or prudence left, how recently and how forcibly we have been cautioned."

Some of the younger knights looked grave at this admonition, and

half rose from their seats.

"Pshaw, messires!" exclaimed the prior of Montfaucon, contemptuously; "you are not about to turn white-livered, I hope! What, Almeric—be with us or against us, man; don't stand shilly-shally, one foot in the water and one on the bank. Take a bold plunge at once, and send Prudence to hell for a wrinkled old beldame, or go and make your peace with the grand visitor. Be anything—do anything but check the sport in which you dare not enter frankly and freely. Come, messires, a story, and a good one, in return for the concert this honest burgher gave us when last we honoured him with our presence."

"And for the sight he afforded us of you pretty lass," said Jacques de Troye, whose barefaced profligacy was a subject of disgust even to many of his unscrupulous associates; if ever Taverney gets up the harem he

speaks of, she shall be the chief sultana."

"Silence, Jacques!" exclaimed the prior of Montfaucon, glancing covertly at Nicholas; "take heed that you spoil not your own game by speaking of such folly out of place. Brothers, let us for the nonce be

grave as Saracens and as silent. A story—a story!"

Almeric, glad of any interruption to the coarse jesting of De Troyes, made no further opposition, and all eyes were directed to Hughes de Fravaux. But the latter, who was generally esteemed the best gabeur, or narrator, of the Parisian Temple House, was in the habit of husbanding his resources and permitting others to break the way. Accordingly, on the present occasion, Bosc de Masvaliers, knowing his humour, ascended the pile of cushions hastily thrown together in the middle of the apartment, whilst the knights resumed their seats round the wall; such as could not be thus accommodated reclining at ease on the furs that covered the floor. Masvaliers, as well as Hughes de Fravaux, but lately returned from the East, was celebrated for his powers of narration, and had often caused the blood of the younger knights to thrill at his recitals; for, debarred participation in the chief pleasure of that age, namely, the listening to tales of history, legendary lore, or romance, sung or rehearsed by professional trouvères, the Templars found in this, as in every other respect, ample compensation among themselves.

I am about to tell you (began the narrator) of what befel two brothers of our Order when in the hands of the assassins, whose name was wont to strike terror into every bosom, whether Christian or Paynim. Indeed, there sat not a native prince on his throne, be his glory and power never so great, there wandered not forth to the Crusades a king so mighty but he might well tremble at that awful name; for, like the angel of death, the assassins hurled their shafts with invisible hands and seldom missed the mark—the pomp of royalty, the soldier's shield and

spear, or the saintly robe being all insufficient to protect the victim whom murder had marked as its prey. If, perchance, the assassin failed in his given task, another and another followed in his footsteps until the deed was done. Should he be taken, his own hand usually dealt his death-blow; but if he were denied that boon, the most savage tortures human ingenuity could devise failed to wring from him the secrets of his association.

Whilst we, the Templars, were carving out our road to fame and fortune with the edge of our swords, this strange confederacy of crime and cruelty achieved both with the points of their daggers. Wherever their menacing mandate winged its way treasures were laid open to them, and glad were those of whom it was required to pay tribute, however large, to the mysterious chief of this secret state, rather than lay their heads upon their pillows each night with fear and trembling; and though veiling their cowardice from mortal eyes, many a hero of the Western world did not scorn to purchase life at the same price. Their poniards, too, might be bought as well as warded off with gold; and it has been rumoured of almost every party in turn, in those disastrous wars, that they resorted to these easy means of getting rid of a powerful enemy. Thus an organised gang of trained bandits, whose haunts were hidden or inaccessible, thrived for more than a century, its members gliding through the country unknown and even unsuspected.

We had been long established in the country, and had never come in collision with the chief or any of his sect, when our grand master, having received intelligence of some Christian pilgrims of note being intercepted by the Infidels and dragged beyond he hills into the states of one of the most powerful of the Asiatic princes, resolved on attempting their redemption; for the pilgrims not belonging to the Order he could offer such ransom as would, he thought, move the cupidity of their captors. The overtures were the great difficulty. Two of our most experienced knights, best versed in the Oriental languages, and thoroughly acquainted with the country, were selected to negotiate this delicate affair; and having received the necessary instructions from the grand master, well mounted and armed, they departed on their perilous and weary journey.

More than once did they dye their brands with the blood of unbelievers whom they met by the way; but being bound on a mission of peace, they abstained in sound policy from so doing more frequently than occasion called for. Setting aside, however, these trifling and not unwelcome molestations—for they thrust into their vests many a goodly brooch torn from the turbans of the slain—they proceeded to the foot of the hills, and even traversed the first passes without encountering hostilities.

To their surprise, the few boors they met fled from them, or veiled their eyes with their hands, as though the white robe were a sight of horror; as they advanced, however, these people were more rarely visible, or instantly disappeared on the approach of the knights.

Evening was fast coming, and the way grew wilder and more rugged until they entered a rocky defile, where the steeds, though their riders dismounted and led them with all possible care, could scarce be kept from stumbling, so broken was the road. The gorge became narrower at every step; rocks piled on rocks, towering overhead, well-nigh inter-

cepted what little of light still lingered in the heavens; and deep below the narrow footpath they were treading rolled a rapid torrent, whose incessant roar silenced their own voices whenever they attempted to devise some plan for extricating themselves from the difficulties of their position. For, so far as the fading light permitted them to ascertain, at no great distance before them the way was altogether blocked up by huge, dark masses, which they naturally enough conjectured to be fragments of the gigantic rocks above, hurled to their base by some accident of nature. Be they what they might, they were clearly an obstacle that brought their present course to an end; and they now became convinced they had threaded the wrong valley.

They were in great perplexity; for to remain on that spot was as impossible as to advance, and to retrace their steps would be no easy matter in the obscurity that would shortly veil the ravine, and there had not been a living being in sight for upwards of an hour. Suddenly, however, as they paused to hold counsel together, a human figure started up between them, as if conjured from the torrent at their side. It was that of a slender youth, clad in a costume not very dissimilar from their own, but unarmed, except with a poniard. More by signs than by words, he made the knights understand that he wished them to follow him; and glad of any relief from the awkward predicament in which they stood, they would cheerfully have done so had they but known how.

The youth, perceiving their embarrassment, clapped his hands, the echo reverberating the sound, when a few agile forms, similar to that already on the scene, leapt into the path, and, at a sign from the former, appeared anxious to take charge of the steeds. This the knights at first resolutely opposed; but comprehending so far the signs and jargon of the strangers as to make out that they were willing to serve them as guides, they threw their bridles to a couple of the striplings, and following the youthful stranger, retraced their steps along the brink of the

torrent, whilst the rest brought up the rear with the horses.

They had proceeded for some time in silence, when hearing no longer the sound of their horses' hoofs, they looked back and perceived that the animals and some of the young men were missing. To their angry remonstrances their leader replied in a calm tone that their steeds had been taken round by an easier path, and would shortly be restored to them. Notwithstanding this assurance they began to suspect that something was wrong; but how to rectify matters was no easy problem, and they

mentally prepared for captivity, which seemed now inevitable.

Turning from the road they were obliged to clamber up rocks almost inaccessible to the foot of man; and unequal to the unwonted exertion, were fain to halt for breath, whilst their young guide and his companions, unencumbered by the weight of years and armour, leapt from crag to crag with the agility of panthers, and were soon lost to sight. But presently reappearing, they beckoned the knights onward, where they stood at the mouth of a cave, which had obviously been concealed by some contrivance.

Here the darkness was so dense that it was impossible, without assistance, to move a step in the right line; and two of the youths took the adventurers by the hand to lead them forward. It was long ere the

knights emerged from this obscurity; when they did so, however, they found themselves in another valley, or, as they shrewdly suspected, a continuation of that which they had left, beyond the point where the huge

fragments of stone had intercepted their progress.

Although the tardy moon now rose, her uncertain, quivering light rather exaggerated than softened the stern features of the scenery, imparting to them something fantastic and terrific. Their young and active guides, as they flitted around them, undergoing the greatest exertion with an appearance of such utter absence of effort as to give them an air almost of the supernatural, added to the impression of the scene and hour; and the knights half yielded to the creeping sensation of being victims to some mountain sprites—the often heard of race of genii that people every cavern in the East. But neither crossing themselves nor rurbing their eyes could dissolve the spell under which they imagined themselves to labour, and yielding wholly to their fate they toiled on in silence, prepared to encounter the worst that might befal, and to defy the powers of darkness were they even to confront them bodily the next instant.

How long they held on this strange course they knew not, when, suddenly, they halted at the mouth of another cavern, from which the light of torches streamed full, displaying a numerous group of persons of the

same age and appearance as their guides.

They stood at the entrance motionless as statues. At the approach of the strangers, however, they opened to suffer them to pass, but closed again the moment they had crossed the threshold. Beside a rough table, hewn out of the solid rock, stood a man past the prime of life, athletic in no ordinary degree, whose savage aspect seemed to threaten the knights with a very doubtful reception. Now that they were better able to distinguish features, where hitherto they could make out little more than the outline of form, they remarked that, though these striplings were obviously of a mixed race, the same expression of unmitigated ferocity pervaded the countenances of all—the same unflinching spirit lighted up their eyes with a kindred look—they might have been thought scions of one stock.

The man at the table gravely welcomed the Templars, but after a stern fashion of his own, partaking not of Eastern courtesy. He appeared to be a chief in this strange association. His white woollen robe, girt with a red scarf, differed in length and amplitude from those worn by the young men, whose short open tunics hindered in nothing the rapidity of their movements. His close-fitting crimson cap was of finer texture than theirs; and he wore red sandals with lacings—in all other respects his appearance was the same as that of his companions, and like them the only weapon visible about his person was a damaskeened poniard of unusual length, conspicuously stuck in his girdle.

The knights, as they took in all these points, easily guessed the real character of those into whose fastness they had unwittingly blundered—they saw at once that they were in the power of the far-famed assassins. Nothing daunted, they were about to address the person before them in no moderate terms of reproach for having thus intercepted them, when the chief, or he that seemed to be such, checked the explosion of their anger by a deprecatory sign, and taking up a torch from the wall mo-

tioned them to follow. Being thus made aware that he was not the

principal authority there, the knights silently obeyed.

The cavern grew narrower as they proceeded, until it terminated in a passage branching off to the right, which, after many turnings and windings, gave access to another cave, similarly lighted, whose only visible issue was the way by which they entered it. The former cavern was smooth, as though chiselled out from the solid rock; but here the ground was broken with deep pits and chasms, the stone and sand overhead seemed insecure and threatening, whilst strange-looking excavations, or natural hollows, in the walls, furnished with strong iron gratings, and emitting sundry fierce sounds, told the practised ears of the Templars that they were tenanted by wild beasts. The further extremity was closed by a broad sheet of dark water, which descended a fearful abyss, so deep the ear but faintly caught its fall-a gloomier and more impassable barrier than ever could have been made by mortal hand.

In this den stood, grouped together, twelve men or more, clad like their conductor-like him past the meridian of life, but whose vigour seemed yet unimpaired. In the midst was one whom the Templars, at the first glance, knew to be the celebrated Old Man of the Mountain. He was of low stature and diminutive proportions. His snow-white beard and hair, contrasting forcibly with the adust visage they enframed, thin, sharp features and parchment skin, crossed with a thousand lines, indicated extreme old age; but a flame borrowed from hell-fire seemed to light up his eyes, and made them glare as carbuncles are said to glow in

This personage motioned the knights to approach, and addressed them in the lingua franca, the mixed jargon in general use throughout the East among the diverse races that mingle there.

"You are Christian knights, methinks?" said the chief of the

assassins.

"Poor soldiers of the Cross," replied the senior Templar, "on a mission of charity."

"Proud Templars say rather!" continued the Old Man; "and what

may be the nature of your charitable errand?"

"That concerns thee not," answered the knight, haughtily. " Not directly," was the reply; "but I might assist you."

"We want no assistance at any man's hand," said the Templar; "all we require is to pursue our road."

"No one shall molest you if you be but reasonable. Are you aware,

Templars, in whose presence you stand?"
"As we think," said the younger knight, "we are in the den of certain robbers called assassins in the language of the country."

Those who surrounded the Old Man became furious at these bold

words.

"Nay, brothers, be still," urged the chief. "Revenge is at hand, and easy-there's no hurry. Let us fairly try these men. We know the Templars are high of speech, but their pride is a tree that may be bent."

"Never," exclaimed the elder Templar, haughtily, "shall a poor soldier of the Cross stoop to a Saracen hound which he is bounden by his vow to spit at and defy unto death."

"Hear him! Hear him! Down the cataract with the insolent Nazareens! To the wild beasts with them! Throw them down the pit!" Such were the cries of the assassins, whilst their looks of intense hatred

added force to their words.

"We have time—we have time," coolly reiterated the Old Man.

"Let us first hear all they have to say, and tell them our terms. Brave Templars," he continued, throwing as much courtesy into his manner as was compatible with his general bearing, "you are, for the time being, in our hands, far from your friends and from all human succour, with no earthly chance of rescue. It is, therefore, but reasonable to give us fair words instead of foul, and soften our humour as much as you may. We are not despicable enemies, and might prove convenient friends; but our friendship must be conciliated by other means than by abuse. We have already thought of you, and were well pleased to hear of your coming hitherward; it has saved us the trouble of sending a messenger to your strongholds—a messenger of peace or of war, according to the manner in which his errand should be received."

"And what would you assassins with the Holy Order of the Temple?"

demanded the elder knight, with unfeigned surprise.

"A truce—we would not be at enmity with you."

"I doubt it not—but then must you buy our forbearance—buy it with gold. A yearly tribute to be applied to the benefit of poor pilgrims might, perhaps—if large and punctually paid——"

The knight had proceeded thus far before the Old Man recovered from

his astonishment, when, interrupting him, he exclaimed:

"A tribute, Sir Templar! You rave! Had our messenger found his way to Jerusalem, your grand master would have seen that, as the first

condition of peace, we exact a considerable yearly payment!"

Both the knights laughed heartily at the thought suggested by the Old Man's words; and their merriment sounded so strange in that dread spot, that even its wilder tenants were scared by it into silence. The assassins gazed with wonderment at each other. At length their chief, his eyes gleaming with malignancy, replied:

"Affect not to hold us in scorn, Sir Templar. Thou knowest full well that the most Christian sovereign of Jerusalem has not disdained to purchase our good will; thou knowest, too, that our poniards have

reached hearts through the mail shirt."

"And thinkest thou that they have any terror for the Templar? Say thou murderest an obscure knight or two whom, now and then, thou mayest catch in ambush—dost imagine to affect thereby a society like ours? These are the risks of war—the very fate we look forward to, and brave. Our brothers say we have fallen in the good cause, and have done our duty; and we are forgotten like the pebble flung in the water when the ripple is over. Do thy worst by us, and twenty such as we, what matters it?"

" Hold you your lives thus lightly?"

"We were no true soldiers of the Temple, but craven hounds, if we held them of more value than a belt and a knife. This, Old Man, is one of the lessons taught by the Red Cross."

"But if we aim not our shafts at the sparrows, but at the vulture?

What if your grand master fell?"

"The grand master cannot fall—his seat is never vacant. If God permit thine evil hand to touch our venerable superior, another would instantly start up."

"And if he fell-and the next-and the next after him, thinkest thou

many would crave the seat of honour?"

"Hundreds would be ready to spring into it, though each successive one died the next instant. He who takes upon himself the white mantle, seeks not a life of ease, but an honourable death—the shroud of glory; such is our hope, such alone is what we live for."

The Old Man again exchanged a look with his colleagues.

"But," continued the knight, "think not such a war as that thou speakest of can be waged against our Order; we would force your fastnesses, and not leave a living thing within them but the vultures to feed on your foul carcases, or starve you within your caverns, if we could not unearth you. Nay, now I bethink me, the chapter has spoken of your depredations, and is about to devise means to exterminate you by a bold stroke at once and for ever. You have laid your hands too freely upon the Christians of late. The Asiatic princes will gladly avail themselves of our succour, and aid us with their knowledge of the country."

"You bethink yourself of this somewhat tardily," observed the Old

Man, with a shrewd smile.

"Because," answered the Templar, "the matter was dropped awhile to pursue objects of greater import; but now your fate is decided; for should you intercept our return, that alone will be sufficient to bring down upon you the best lances of the Temple; and if we go back to give an account of your whereabouts, you will be rooted out from the face of the earth like noxious weeds that the husbandman lays in the sun to wither."

The chief held a whispered colloquy with his associates for a few minutes; then they silently withdrew, some retiring into the narrow passage, whilst others, among whom was the Old Man, glided in the direction of the waterfall, and the flickering light of the torches being insufficient to dispel the gloom, it seemed to the astounded Templars as though the uncouth beings actually disappeared behind its dark veil.

Suddenly the torches were extinguished, and the knights were left in utter darkness. To grope their way back to the passage which their enemies doubtless guarded, were to brave certain death at the point of their daggers, and to move a single step in another direction, forewarned by their previous examination of the ground, was, they knew, as surely to meet their fate. They doubted not but the cages around them were about to be opened, and their brute occupants let loose upon them; and remembering with pride that such had been the death of the blessed martyrs, they rather gloried in, than lamented it. Certain that their enemies, though unseen by them, had means of witnessing their end, they determined to show the Paynim hounds how a Templar could meet death; and having made, in their native language, a hasty confession to each other, they sat down upon the damp ground and chanted, in loud, strong voices, those hymns most appropriate to their position, occasionally pausing in wonder at their being left so long undisturbed. More than an hour elapsed thus, when the torchlight again gleamed around them, and the assassins, evidently but just risen from a stormy council-for their

faces were flushed and their brows darkened with the spirit of debatereappeared before them.

"Well," said the chief, addressing the elder knight, "art thou of the

same mind as when we left the cave?"

"Now and ever."

"Can we not purchase thy promise of secrecy?"

"With what wouldst thou purchase it?" rejoined the knight, scornfully.

"Gold and jewels were a bribe, perhaps, even for thee and thy com-

panion."

"What would it avail us? The Templar has no private property."
"You will, then, encounter death in this cave rather than pledge yourselves by a solemn vow to silence as to this meeting?"

"We care not for death, I tell thee-life is but a weary pilgrimage,

and blessed are those whose course is run."

"Strange constancy!" murmured the Old Man. "Can nothing move

you from your purpose?-name your own terms."

"Promptly agree to pay a large annual tribute," said the Templars, coolly, "or give us back our horses and you'll soon meet with the chastisement you deserve."

"By my father's beard! I never heard aught equal to thy presumption!" said the Old Man, moved from his assumed calmness—"you are bold, too, as presumptuous, but we can match thee in daring. Hassan, call one of the lads hither—the first come—don't pause to choose."

In a few minutes their former guide emerged from the obscurity of the passage, and stood in breathless awe before the chief of the as-

sassins.

"Murad," said the latter, in a tone whose sternness contrasted with the bland voice in which he had hitherto spoken—"Murad, art thou ready?"

"Ready!" exclaimed the youth, with energy.

"If I bid thee drive thy poniard into the bosoms of yonder knights?"

"It has met nobler breasts ere now," said the lad, with a glance of savage pride that made even the Templars' blood thrill, so dreadful was the contrast of his hardened spirit with the graceful figure which it animated. It seemed as though a demon had been permitted to assume an earthly form, for some unhallowed purpose of the Master Fiend.

"What if I command thee to sheath it in thine own?" said the

chief.

"Joyfully shouldst thou be obeyed."

"Then perish, Murad—thy master permits thee."

Ere the knights could move a step, the youth plunged his dagger up to the hilt in his heart, and fell at the feet of the chief without a groan or murmur; the poor youth expired like a faithful hound turning his last look towards his murderer. The Old Man gazed on him unmoved; then gently pushing away the corpse with his foot, he turned to one of the assistants, and coldly said:

"Throw this body down the cataract—Murad was a good youth. You see, proud Templars, our nerves are not weaker—our courage not

ess than your own."

Whilst all the other witnesses of this species of heathen sacrifice evinced

not the slightest emotion, the Christian knights had viewed it with a

disgust which they were at no trouble to conceal.

The Old Man of the Mountain, who had reckoned upon producing an effect, was obviously mortified at the uselessness of his effort; and not without regret at having flung away a valuable tool so idly.

"Are all the Templars like you?" he now inquired, with an anxious

brow.

"We are but limbs of one body," was the answer, "moved by one and the same impulse."

"Then, indeed, are you like ourselves in habits and spirit as well as in garb; and you, who have not dreaded our displeasure, are fully worthy to share our hospitality, and bask in the sunlight of our friendship."

So saying, he led the way towards the waterfall with some of his grave counsellors, whilst the others tarried in the cave as if for his return. The knights, nothing daunted, followed close upon his heels, even though he seemed about to step into the broad torrent, so near did he approach it. Here he stooped, however, and raising a huge, mossy stone, wet with the dashing spray, and which yielded to his touch with a facility that showed it moved upon secret springs, disclosed to the Templars the mouth of a deep well, a few torches, gleaming upwards from its depth, but dimly struggling through the darkness with lugubrious effect. The Old Man bad them take heed that they missed not the first step, as therein lay the only danger; and another assassin, starting forward at his beck, assisted them in this rather perilous proceeding to those unfamiliar with the contrivance.

Becoming aware, as they cautiously treaded step after step, that they were descending winding stairs of solid, regular structure, well protected from the abyss by a stone parapet nearly breast high, their chief apprehension, that of falling down headlong, was dispelled. Even in their unenviable predicament they could not but wonder at the beauty of the masonry, extending to a depth so great, that when they reached the bottom they were fairly out of breath, and trembled in every limb from unwonted exertion. Here they paused before an iron door which opened upon a subterranean passage, whose high-vaulted arches and strong-supporting pillars hewn out of the rock again excited their admiration, though they cautiously forbore from exhibiting it. They now thought they heard the dashing of the waterfall overhead; but of this they could

not be assured, being unwilling to question their strange guide.

On issuing from this vault, however, they with difficulty refrained from evincing their surprise at the sight which opened upon them. A few steps of easy ascent led to a gallery of white marble, through whose open arches they gazed into gardens of magic beauty upon which the moon shed her radiance, now revealing the mysterious shades of cedar groves, now playing on silvery fountains whose waters lulled the mind to dreamy ecstasy, and shining along the soft vistas of stately alleys in which some flitting, fairy-like forms were now lost in, now brought again to view from out the capricious shadows. At the extremity of the gallery was a hall from which burst forth a blaze of light and strains of a gay, fantastic music. Hither the Old Man conducted the knights; and pausing on the threshold, enabled them to take in the whole scene at a glance.

A hundred snowy feet were tripping to the sounds of those soft, yet inspiring strains; a hundred forms of exquisite female loveliness, but varied according to the clime and race whence they sprung, each habited in the costume of her people or her fancy, were involved in the mazes of the dance; and the majestic beauty in flowing robes, and the tiny fairy in her spangled gauzes, vied with each other in smiles and sweet merriment.

Nubian slaves, whose grim faces threw the charms of their mistresses into greater relief, circulated everywhere about, their heads charged with cooling, delicious freights of fruits and sherbets, or fresh flowers, whose perfume scented the hall. Tables laid out with succulent viands and tempting wines, were placed within the casements; nought that fancy or

taste could prompt seemed to have been forgotten.

"Here," said the Old Man of the Mountain, turning to the knights, "I am compelled to leave you for a brief space; meanwhile, enjoy the reward of valour. All that you behold is yours. These girls are your slaves—the toys of an hour, which the valiant may cast off when they begin to weary of them. These refreshments, if you like them not, shall be replaced by those your taste may suggest. These musicians shall vary or cease their melodies at your command. Everything here must obey your humour; for your strength of mind has awakened the esteem of the assassins, nor will they be backward in displaying it."

With these words he disappeared.

"If we have but one more night to live," said the younger, "'twere wise to make the best of it."

"Act as thou listeth," said the elder; "only beware of leaving thy reason in the wine-flask, or thine honour in the arms of you maidens—I

will abide by my vows.'

Whilst the younger was spending a merry hour or so within the hall, his more sage companion chanted hymns and repeated Paternosters and Aves in the gallery; and whenever it chanced that he was accosted by a female, or Nubian slave offering fragrant wines or the cooling sherbet, his answer was ever the same:

"Avaunt thee, Satanas!"

The moon had withdrawn from her high seat in the heavens, and the night was well-nigh spent, when the Old Man of the Mountain and his counsellors again made their appearance.

"Well, Sir Templar," said he, addressing the elder knight, "how like

you our hospitality?"

"As little as we dread thine enmity," was the answer. "If thou beest indeed well inclined toward us, bring forth our steeds, that we may hasten from scenes so little compatible with our vows and our feelings."

"And what sayest thou?" demanded the chief of the younger, who, at that moment came up, pale and haggard with the night's revelry.

"I say with my companion, fair sir—I would mount and away. One may be done to death with kindness as well as with cruelty."

"Why trouble yourselves to wander farther? Why not make this a

pleasant place of rest for a few days more at least?"

"Because we have enough of it," said the younger, yawning. "Pleasure wearies, but honourable toil nerves the heart and the hand."

"And if this palace—these stores of enjoyment were yours for ever,

would you not remain?"

"Not for a thousand such palaces, had I a thousand lives wherewith to enjoy them!" said the younger knight. "A cup of wine is pleasant to lips parched with the dust of the road or the sand of the desert—a taste of pleasure is sweet after long fast and privation; but idle luxury, unrelieved by the din of arms, the neighing of steeds, and the hurry of the battle-field!—you dream, old dotard, and know not that war is the breath of the Templar's nostrils!"

"You perceive, assassin," interposed the elder, fiercely, "that neither threats can daunt nor fair promises tempt us; therefore bid us treat with

our grand master, or expect no mercy."

"I am moved unto tears by your constancy," said the Old Man of the Mountain, clasping the knight's mantle, and pressing it respectfully to his lips and brow after the Oriental fashion. "The Temple must be a fearful power when its solitary members can dare so much. Your training is even superior to ours; for we yield to pleasure though inured to pain; your souls of sterner mould resist the one and brave the other. Before such spirits mine must bend—before such strength mine is humbled. Sir knights, to your valour we yield cheerfully the tribute which you demand in the name of your grand master. Let him name his own terms, and he shall find me ready to comply with them, even though they be hard—you shall have our gold if you spare us your lances. Your horses have been refreshed, and are now ready for the road; depart with our humble prayer to your people that they interfere not with us, and we promise, in turn, to respect their habit wherever it may meet our eyes."

"Good," said the elder knight-"now to business."

The Templars were from that moment treated with as much deference as they had hitherto been slighted; and when the preliminaries of the treaty were settled, so far as the knights could sanction them without referring to the grand master, they questioned their host more closely about the events of the night, cautiously abstaining from exhibiting inordinate

interest in the subject. The chief then explained, that having been informed by his scouts of their approach to the hills, he had sent out some of his youths to intercept, and conduct them to his presence. Their mistaking the route had facilitated their capture, but obliged his young men to introduce them by the secret valley, completely cut off from the outer ravine by the huge fragment of rock, its natural bulwark on that side, which first barred their Herein, youths of all creeds and races, stolen in early infancy from their parents' roofs, or haply from their mothers' arms, were trained to a life of hardship and to feats of extraordinary daring; caverns such as the knights had first entered being their dwellings, and rocks such as they had with difficulty climbed over, their pleasure-grounds. Delicate children rarely survived so trying an ordeal; but as fresh pupils were easily procured, this was a matter of no concern to the chief. They received no mental culture whatever, but certain vague notions of the Mahomedan paradise, which it was the duty of the guardian of the pupils to represent in the most glowing colours his imagination could suggest. Of this paradise they were informed the chief held the key; hence these

2 Q 2

children were taught but one lesson-to long for death, and to obey their master.

When ripe enough in years and training, the neophyte was exposed to the ordeal of terror in the second cavern, which, previous to this trial, he was never permitted to approach. His courage and nerves here tested, if found to answer the purposes and expectations of the chief, he was administered a drugged draught, which produced sleep so death-like, that he might be carried down the winding stairs and along the subterranean passages without danger of his becoming aware of that which was the most essential part of the confederacy's secret-namely, the private means of ingress and egress. This trance lasted many hours, when the youth woke in the splendid hall or enchanting gardens, which were prepared to exhibit more than their usual magnificence. Here he was allowed to revel in unbridled licentiousness-no moral check, no control being suffered to interfere with this short reign of the senses; but ere cloyed nature could turn away with satiety, or indulgence become a habit, the same Lethe draught was administered, and the devoted youth awoke again among the rude rocks which he was taught to believe his native abode, and his initiation was termed a dream in which paradise had been revealed to him.

This transient gleam of voluptuousness and ease, succeeded by a life of privation and toil, fired the mind and fed the passions of these unhappy striplings, and made them rush into the jaws of death with rapture, deeming to recover thereby the lost joys of their past vision. All these unfortunates were what Murad had been—victims of delusion; and by their untimely and tragic deaths—by their monster deeds during the short period of their wretched existence, they procured for their elders and rulers the permanent enjoyment of those luxuries which but mocked their fancies.

The knights were struck with the singularity of the system which made vice and crime the levers of power; but what chiefly occupied them was the reflection that a people thus formed could not be very extensive, even though, doubtless, there sprang up sprigs among them of their own grafting, and that the Templars would have an easy bargain of them any day should they find it necessary to have recourse to arms. Besides, the foul murderer was never likely, they thought, to stand the brunt of a fair and open attack. But whilst discussing these points in a low tone, they felt very faint with the overpowering scent of some perfumes exhaled from a lighted tripod close at hand, and shortly after fell into unconsciousness.

A COMPANY OF CAPTAINS.

Story?—God bless you, I have none to tell, sir.

CANNING'S Needy Knife-Grinder.

Last summer was the first occasion of my visiting the district sacred to Tres, Pens, and Pols—the Cornish homes and haunts so pleasantly described by Wilkie Collins in his "Rambles beyond Railways." It was just noon when I alighted at the hall-door of Squire Smalley (let me observe, en passant, that what there is of fiction in this sketch extends to names only), and before I had fairly settled in his easy-chair, or had time to ask when he could show me the great copper mine on his lands (Wheal Joseph), he announced that I was engaged to dine with him that day at Captain Penny's, and hoped I was not unwilling to "accept his promissory note" to that effect. I expressed my obligations to this unknown captain.

"You'll meet a round dozen of other captains there," quoth the squire, and as I thought you might like to see something of Cornish character,

I at once booked you a place at the spread."

"Really I was not aware," said I, "that your neighbourhood was so rich in gallant company. The "Army and Navy List" must be in request here. Who is Captain Penny, and what are these his brethren? You make me quite nervous at the prospect of such a gathering. I never dined at mess in my life. Enlighten me a little."

"All in good time," he answered. "But there's nothing to daunt you; they're a rough-and-ready corps; not one man Jack of them will sit down in a dress-coat, or expect you to don one. And so you've never

heard of our captains in this airt?"

"You puzzle me, and exalt me on the tiptoe of expectation."

"Well, you needn't be kept long in that inconvenient posture, for it's

now past twelve, and the dinner is at two."

A two-o'clock dinner party, no dress-coats, and a round dozen of captains!—here was something novel for a wayfaring man from far Middlesex. The squire gained my assent to the engagement, and proposed to explore the subterranean marvels of Wheal Joseph after dinner.

"Expect nothing recherché in that meal," he added; "we are plain folks hereabouts, and the captains stick to the simple and primitive in the matériel as well as the time and manner of their repast. If you can't do with roast beef and suet puddings, you had better anticipate by a preparatory luncheon here. I dare say we can find you some nicknacks

to your mind."

My ride from Dartmoor had given me too sharp an appetite to scoff at the captain's bill of fare; and as I thought of the difference of dinner statistics here and at Belgravia, I remembered with a grin De Quincey's piece of elaborate scholarship and pleasantry, "Dinner Real and Reputed," once famous in the annals of Blackwood. Shortly before two, the squire and I trudged afoot (he, by-the-way, in shooting-jacket and drab gaiters) to the scene of action. We soon came in sight of miners of both sexes, busy at their several allotments of labour. To my surprise, the squire halted at a low-roofed house, surrounded by groups of miners waiting to be paid, informing me that we were at our destination.

"And yonder," said he, pointing to a bluff veteran attired like a miller, and busily engaged in paying off the labourers—"yonder is old Penny himself."

The ceremony (?) of introduction was speedily over.

"Dinner'll be ready in a trice, sir," said the captain. "Perhaps you'll take the gentleman up-stairs, Mr. Smalley,—you know the way,—and I'll

follow you in no time."

We entered the salon à manger accordingly. It was a roomy, but unfurnished apartment, uncarpeted, and nearly filled by a long table, upon which a rather grim Hebe, on the wrong side of fifty, was in the act of placing a prodigious joint of roast beef, which done, she reappeared with a plenteous series of vegetables. And now lounged in, by twos and threes, the other captains, attired like our host in loose wrappers of jean, or some such fabric, and taking their places incontinently at the board. Squire Smalley had a nod for all, and a few words of greeting for some; but all in a brusque, off-handed sort of way, which they evidently took as a matter of course.

"That tall man, whetting his knife," he observed to me, in a subdued voice, "is Captain Dick, the most valiant trencherman in the county; and as for drinking, he comes of the stock of the 'humorous patrician' Menenius Agrippa—'one that loves a cup of hot wine, with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't.' Poor man! if his nose bespeak not his kinship to Bardolph, he ought to indict it for libel. Yonder round-shouldered, flabby-faced fellow—he with the squint, or north eye, as we call it—is Captain Pollux (Castor and Pollux we dub him when he sports his very broad-brimmed Sunday hat); he officiates, by-the-way, as a local preacher, and enjoys a vast reputation among those who like a sermon to have its The kind-faced worthy next him is Captain Penrose, seventeenthly. the most obliging and good-natured of living creatures. His every sentence has either an 'if you please' or a 'thank you' in it, and sometimes both; he'll say 'if you please' when you borrow his penknife, and 'thank you' when you tell him you've lost it. The bald-headed veteran twirling his horny thumbs is Captain Braund, the Orpheus of these parts -very great on the cornet-à-pistons, and a ne plus ultra at extemporising a second in duets and trios. Captain Job and Captain Cleaver, the two whisperers at the end of the table, are our political oracles; they cram up the leading articles of the Examiner and the Spectator, and retail them in infinitesimal doses to the neighbourhood at large. But here comes Captain Penny-and none too soon, for the beef is getting cold."

Captain Penny forthwith took the chair, and grace being said, proceeded to carve with vigour and address. Nor could the Homeric heroes have shown to more advantage in the consumption of edibles. The captains, one and all, were evidently entrusted by nature with plenipotentiary powers of swallow. Earnest in their work, they scorned to employ their mouths in other purpose than the "great fact" of dining; to talk would have gendered a cry of "Question, question!" This intentness on the sensual part of the meal might involve them, according to some definitions, in a clear charge of gluttony. But I should be slow to assent to the charge. I remember that Christopher North, in one of the ambrosial Noctes, asks the Shepherd whether there is any test of gluttony; and James answers, that so long as the diners retain a capacity of smiling, and

of looking at you and round the table, attending to or joining in the talk-every now and then laying down their knife and fork to call for ale, or ask somebody to take wine, or tell an anecdote-so long, he declares, "they're no in a state o' gluttony, but are devourin' their soup, fish, flesh, and fowl, like men and Christians." It is to be feared this test of intellectual interregna and social benignities would hardly avail our company of captains. But they deserved a verdict of "Not guilty," if tried by the subsequent clauses of the Shepherd's proposition, which ran thus: "But as sune's their chin gets creeshy-their cheeks lang, sallow, and clunk-clunky-their nostrils wide-their een fixed-their faces close to the trencher, and themselves dumbies—then you may see a specimen o' the immoral and unintellectual abandonment o' the sowl o' man to his gustative natur'; then is the fast, foul, fat feeder a glutton, -the maist disgustfuest cretur' that sits." Of the grosser part of these characteristics my fellow-guests were innocent; and the calmness and ordinary aspect of their after-dinner doings proved that they had been occupied in no very unnatural or, to them, unwholesome business, and triumphantly cleared them of the disreputable charge. I could not, perhaps, have eaten a third of what they individually demolished, without establishing a decided case of gluttony; but then I was not born and bred to the hardy habits and exercise of a Cornish captain.

By this time I had outgrown my error in identifying these "captains" with the army and navy worthies, and found that they were simply the overseers of the miners, to whom this nom de guerre was technically attached; and that it was their custom to meet together in the present manner once a month, when accounts were settled, and general good-fellowship insured. Captain Penny, as the senior of Wheal Joseph, presided ex officio; and as he was a good-humoured carver and an expert maker of punch, universal satisfaction greeted him as primus inter pares.

When the table was cleared, the first course being also the last (a fact which the captains were clearly aware of), Captain Penny proceeded, with an air of appropriate dignity, to manufacture a huge bowl of punch, the main feature in which process, he informed the company, as he poured in the brandy, was to have a "leeberal spirit." Captain Job happened to be opposed to intoxicating liquors, and on his behoof the chairman appealed to our Hebe whether there was any elder or orange-wine down stairs.

Hebe was a Cockney, I discovered; and, certainly, her answer was an aspiration after the most approved mode of Cockaigne.

"Law, yes, captain," she exclaimed; "plenty of both: the helder

marked with a 'he,' and the horange with a 'ho.'"

No "bumper toast went round," though the "jolly mortals filled their glasses" with hearty good-will. The fatigues of carving and brewing over, Captain Penny began to be communicative, and a general hum of conversation gradually uprose. An inquiry was made why Captain Sander was absent to-day.

"I met him this morning on the way to Launce'on," said Captain Dick, "and he told me he was off to Ned Isaac's, to dine on cow tart."

The squire nudged me. "Did you ever hear beefsteak-pic called by that name before?"

"Ned Isaacs," said Captain Penny, "is aperiently [sic] a shrewd lad. He's worth his hundreds now; and I remember when he kept a little

shop for cakes and puddings. Folks used to laugh at his ticket in the window— 'Fig-pudding, fourpence a pound; figgier, fourpence half-

penny."

"I've seen the ticket many a time," observed the squire, "and thought Ned happy at coining so expressive and racy a comparative degree. Your Regent-street shopmen would have substituted 'extra rich,' 'superfine,' or some such tedious circumlocution."

"Had Captain Sander his cousin, the Yorkshire Quaker, with him?"

inquired the chairman.

"That he had," answered Captain Dick, "and aperiently as hearty as when we last saw him, on the Stilton-cheese day. You remember that day, sir?" (to the squire.)

"Perfectly," replied my friend, laughing. "But tell the story, cap-

tain, to our guest here."

"Well, sir," began Captain Dick, turning to me, "some years ago the Quaker was paying a visit to his cousin, at Wheal Betsy, and was invited to an agricultural dinner at P——. He sat next the chairman at dinner; and that gentleman having cut up portions of cheese for the company at large, handed the plate to his Quaker neighbour to begin with. It seems the Quaker had not been used to this way of doing things, and had no idea that the plate was meant to travel round the table; so he looked gravely at the plate, and then at the chairman, and then very deliberately remarked, 'Friend, thee'st cut me a pretty considerable quantity; howbeit, I'll wrostle wi' 'um.' And, so saying, he began to clear the decks in a tidy fashion, I can tell you."

Old and familiar as was the story, there was a joyous guffaw from all

assembled, as the Quaker's celebrated mot was repeated.

"That Captain Dick," privately observed the squire to me, "is quite as capable of clearing off a few pounds of Stilton, and drowning them in port besides. Did you ever see such a proboscis? I sometimes think its longitude must have been measured by the 'Modern Pythagorean,' before he wrote his sketch of 'The Man with the Nose.' Captain Dick was dining one day at our house, when my little babbling niece Agnes was at table; and my wife, in a panic lest the saucy child should say or ask something touching the captain's prominent member, had enjoined the strictest silence upon her, and promised an unlimited supply of grapes if the injunction was observed. Agnes kept faith. But, alas! my wife, in her excessive solicitude to avoid the forbidden topic, set the table in a roar by requesting the captain, not to 'make a long arm,' but to 'make a long nose,' and pass her the mustard!"

Captain Job, about this time, showed a desire to broach politics, but saving his *fidus Achates*, Captain Cleaver, there was no one to encourage his essay. This failing, Captain Pollux tried the thin end of the wedge of matters ecclesiastical, adroitly eschewing offence by complimenting the present clergy of the neighbourhood at the expense of their predecessors. As the theme gave occasion to a few local pleasantries, it was

allowed to have a brief currency.

"I'm not a Churchman," said Captain Pollux, "but I'm free to own that the Church ministers of these parts are no longer open to the same charges as formerly. In this very parish, I remember Parson Robarts riding into the street one Sunday morning, in scarlet coat, with a pack of hounds around him, and in this guise meeting his own congregation on

their way to church. They say he was so pressed for time, that he had to throw the surplice over his red jacket, and scamper into the reading-desk, the dogs at his heels. Who can wonder at dissent, gentlemen, in

those days, whatever you may think of it now?"

Captain Penny took up the illustration of Parson Robarts's character. "My brother Tony," he said, "(now, like the parson, in his grave) had made an offer one Saturday for some of the rectory pigs, but not up to the parson's mark. Next morning they met on their way to church, and the parson eagerly tried to drive a better bargain with Tony, continuing his efforts and arguments up to the porch, where they naturally made a halt. Still Tony held out. So the parson, seeing it was time to begin prayers, says to him at parting: 'Well, well; think it over during service, and we can settle it when we come out.'"

Captain Pollux could remember the same divine's love of angling on

Sunday afternoons. This suggested an anecdote to the squire.

"The Vicar of P——, where my uncle had a farm," said he, "used frequently to take the duty of the adjoining parish, in the absence of the incumbent. On such occasions there was no service at his own church, of which the clerk had instructions to give notice in these terms: 'There will be no service here next Sunday, as the vicar is going to officiate in the next parish.' This notice, however, was thus rendered by the old clerk in question: 'There'll be no Zunday here next Zunday, bekase measter's going a fishing in next parish.' What liberties I have heard that old man take with the Queen's English, while leading the responses of the congregation!"

"I have heard his master commit similar slips," said our chairman. "The last time I heard him preach was at the archdeacon's visitation; and I presume his mind was absorbed in the event of the day, else I can't account for his repeatedly styling Satan, in the course of his sermon, not the archangel, but the archdeacon. Mr. Churchwarden Adams spoke of proceeding against him in the Consistory Court, for brawling

in church, and speaking evil of dignities."

But to proceed seriatim through the ana of this post-prandial discourse would tax my memory, as well as the reader's toleration. One

or two more, however, I will venture to add.

In a churchyard, not very far distant from the parish we were in, is an inscription on a tombstone to the following effect (for the ipsissima verba I cannot vouch, but the pith of the pathos is retained):- "Sacred to the memory of Mary Anne Metters, who was cruelly murdered by her farm-servant while the family was at market, on Friday, the - of June, 18-, leaving a disconsolate husband to mourn her untimely loss, for which horrid offence he was tried and executed at the ensuing assizes at Exeter." It was in passing through the same churchyard, I believe, that two Cornish miners, who were out on a holiday jaunt, and were armed with a blunderbuss, wherewith "a sporting they would go, go, go," observed in a hole of the ivy-mantled tower a bird whose aspect at once struck them as that of a rara avis in terris. The bird would not have puzzled Mr. Broderip or Professor Owen, but Jan and Joseph were no zoologists, and could as soon have explained the Hellenic derivation of "ornithology," as guess the species, or even the genus, of the creature whose gaze was riveted on theirs.

"Shall I shoot, Joe?" said Jan, bravely.

"Better not," answered Joseph, a little awe-stricken at the indefinable looks of the bird. "Maybe it belongs to the church, and you'll be murdering you don't know what."

"Whether or no," stoutly replied Jan, "I'll have a shoot at him. Here goes, my pretty!" and thereupon Jan let fly the contents of his piece, and had the triumph of beholding the mysterious creature fall to

the ground at his feet.

Joe, aghast with apprehension, stooped to examine the victim—the singular frontispiece of which only redoubled his consternation. "What can it be, think'st thou?" asked Jan, himself a little appalled, and troubled with vague surmises as to the possible connexion between bird and church sanctity.

"Oh, Jan, Jan!" fervently exclaimed his comrade, "thou'st been

and shot a cher-y-ubim!"

I fear the poor miners went home in a state of mind faintly shadowed forth by the remorse of him who shot the albatross, in Coleridge's legend. I wish the reader could have heard the emphasis with which Captain

Penny recited Joe's exegesis of the sacrilege.

How this "company of captains" dealt wholesale in facetiæ, which I have retailed so scantily; how one story suggested another, and another, and another; how we explored the abysses of Wheal Betsy, when the punch-bowl was dried up; and how, on subsequent occasions, I saw more into the genial eccentricities of the captains,—must be narrated, if at all, in another paper. Hearty old fellows, they were a gallant company!

DONNINGTON.

BY EDWARD WILBERFORCE.

TURN where we will, fresh beauties meet us there-A poet's residence is rightly fair! The pleasant murmur of the brooks that run With rippling wavelets sparkling in the sun; Whether in shallow turns they wend their way, Or rougher o'er uneven bottoms play, Or 'neath the bridge one moment hid from view, Onward their uncontrolled career pursue. Some bridge with clustering ivy o'er it twined, That lawless doth in mazy circles wind-Inspires soft fancies to the poet's mind. Ye trees luxuriant in your leafy show, Ye humbler shrubs that 'neath their shadows grow, Whose graceful branches seem as though they gave A kiss of friendship to each passing wave. Ye sloping upland lawns, ye gloomy yews, Accept the tribute of a humble Muse. And oh! the wondrous sight it is to see The giant branches of you cedar-tree; The mighty limbs, as of some giant Dane, Firm linked together by a massy chain; Or as some rebel Son of Earth, who strove From his high throne to cast the Almighty Jove With more than mortal pow'r, and void of fear, Pelion on Ossa striving to uprear.

MEG OF MUMPS-HA'.

A CUMBERLAND TRADITION.

By W. PATTINSON.

In the churchyard of Little Denton, in Cumberland, is a tombstone to the memory of Margaret Teesdale, on which are the following lines:

> What I was once all can relate, What I am now is each one's fate, What I must be none can explain Till He that called call again.

This Margaret Teesdale is the Tibb Mumps of "Guy Mannering," in whose cabin Brown, Meg Merrilies, and Dandie Dinmont met—the Meg Murdox of the "Heart of Mid-Lothian," and the terrible "Meg of Mumps-Ha'" of Cumberland traditions. Many wild and fearful tales are told of the deeds of this woman and the gang of desperadoes that she harboured about her establishment. That she had sold her soul to the enemy of mankind was currently believed, which increased the dread in which she was held, at a time when the laws were too weak to reach her and her gang for their evil deeds. The house in which she lived is at present a small grocer's shop near the Rose-hill station on the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway, and tradition says that underneath the flags in the floor of a small back room is a deep pit, into which the bodies of her murdered victims were thrown. Such was the terror with which the neighbouring peasantry were inspired, that no one durst pass the house after nightfall. The following story is stated to be the last crime in which she was engaged; and there is no doubt as to the main facts of the murder being true, but allowance must of course be made for the romantic

garb in which it is generally related.

It happened that a lad, a servant to a neighbouring farmer, was returning home from the "smithy" late of an autumn evening, and was obliged to pass this way, there being no other road to his master's house. On turning an angle in the road which brought him in view of the dreaded domicile, he observed a light shining through a small window in the end or gable of the house. This greatly alarmed him, not doubting that, as she and her inmates were astir, the noise of the horse's feet would attract their attention. To prevent this, and get past unheard if possible, he drew the horse from off the middle of the road, and rode along the greensward close by the hedge; but on arriving opposite the place, where the light was throwing a white streak across the road, the animal made a full stop, and refused to proceed any further! What was to To dismount and run for it was his first impulse; but the dread of encountering his master without the horse deterred him, whilst to remain where he was would be certain death if any of the gang came out, as they would suspect him of eavesdropping. He remained a few minutes in this situation, and the light still continued at the window, whilst every other part of the house was dark and silent. At length gaining courage, as no one appeared, he slackened the rein, when, to his terror and astonishment, the animal crossed the road to the window, and again stood stock-still close to it. The lad lowered his head and looked in. The first person that attracted his notice was the dreadful landlady Meg, holding a candle near a bed, on which lay two men undressed.

After watching a few minutes longer, the two men arose, and Meg pulled away the pillows, and discovered to the view of the terror-struck eavesdropper the body of a man who had evidently died from suffocation. They next searched the pockets of their victim, and pulled a purse of gold from his breast, when, pouring its contents upon a small table that stood in a corner of the room, they closed round it and counted it over. The lad, until the day of his death, solemnly averred that at this moment a strange and fearful personage suddenly looked over Meg's shoulder, grinning horribly at the booty. When the money was returned to the bag the stranger had disappeared, nor did it seem to the lad that they were at all aware of a fourth person having been present. They next dragged the body towards the bed, and opening a trap-door underneath it, threw it in. The light was then suddenly extinguished, and the lad, chilled with terror, pursued his journey home uninterrupted. this was the unfortunate pedlar or not is uncertain; but the lad having told his story on his arrival home, it was soon rumoured all over the neighbourhood, and a neighbouring magistrate, to be satisfied of the truth of this tale, was resolved to search the house. Nothing, however, was found; and although the floor was closely examined, no trace of any such place as that described by the boy could be found; it was, therefore, concluded that he must have been deceived. One thing was, however, certain; the pedlar had been seen by several parties in the house, but no one had seen him leave it. It is said that the body was removed from the house, and buried underneath Mumps-Ha' Bridge; but that being thought too public a place it was removed, and buried in the Gapshields Moss. Strange stories were now circulated as to death-lights having been seen to leave the bridge and settle on the moss, and it was firmly believed that the man lay buried there; but ere any search could be made the body was again removed and buried in a hollow woody place, called the "Dead Man's Slack." But the lights that had travelled from the bridge to the moss now continued their journey to this his last resting-place, hovering over the bushes, and settling on the dead man's grave! The place was at length searched, and the body found. Agreeable to a custom common in those days the body was laid out in the church, and every person was compelled to come and touch it, in the expectation of some sign being shown if the actual murderer was amongst the number. Meg attended, "and," says my informant, "when it was her turn to touch, she went 'three steps forward and one backward,' and in this manner approached the corpse, which she touched, but no sign followed." It appears that nothing more was made of it. If she was really guilty of the crime, she escaped that punishment which was her deserved due.

It was not long after this that Meg died, and a more dreadful day for

thunder, lightning, and hail, was never seen in Cumberland.

A short while before she breathed her last a loud rap was heard at the door, at which the dying woman testified great uneasiness. The attendants were terrified, and durst not answer the summons. When seized with her last convulsions, her eyes were fixed on the window; and on the females looking in the same direction the form of the murdered pedlar was seen close to the panes, his long hair hanging down and clotted with blood, and the glazed eyes fixed upon the dying woman.

The particular place where the pedlar was found is still called the

"Dead Man's Slack."

FOSSIL TRUTHS.

ERROR springs from truth, as the healthful root bears berries of poison, so from the great trunks of primitive tradition radiate the thousand branches of ancient mythologies—within these forms of falsehood truth lies embedded, like the living moss within an agate. Break open a road-side flint, and from its stony shell you gather those sparkling crystals which shed a light even back upon antediluvian chaos—so in old myth and story is walled up, or rather embalmed, the royal corpse of some half-forgotten verity.

In a preceding article, entitled "Living Branches on Dead Trees," we reviewed briefly the analogies of Brahminism with the Mosaic writings.

In the present we will sketch the legends of Scandinavia.

The religion of the Norsemen, the last but most terrible horde who overspread Europe, is as complex as the mythology of even the vast creation of the Indian priestcraft, but grotesque and barbarous as it is rude and unwieldy—full of savage energy, it has the unity of the epic, and abounds in prophecies for the future as well as traditions of the remotest past.

The Scandinavian imagination, coloured by the scenes of the thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice and lifeless tracts lit by day by the prismatic scintillations of the iceberg, and at night by the meteoric glimmerings of the Northern Lights, has filled its fables with shapeless visions of seasnakes, gigantic wolves, and nameless monsters, true fellows of the whale and of the shark.

In the beginning of time, say their sacred books, in the reign of chaos, when there was neither sea nor shore, sun nor star, grew up two worlds, one hot and flaming to the south, the other dark and cloudy to the north. From the dark world flowed into the abyss of space torrents of

venom, which as they poured hardened into ice.

The warm air from the southern world melted the icy mists, and from their vivifying warmth sprang the giant Ymir. From him emanated a race of giants evil and wicked as their sire; from a cow that sprang to life from the same vital power, came the race of Bor, the ancestor of Odin. Between these two races, types of the families of Seth and Cain, there was endless war till Ymir fell, and in his blood, which inundated the world, were drowned all his seed, except one, who with his family were saved in an ark. With the body of their foe, the good and victorious race formed a new world, though it seems un ertain where they lived until it was made. The mountains are his bones, his skull the dome of heaven, and of two floating pieces of drift wood, Ask and Embla (Adam and Eve) were formed.

The Scandinavian heaven is divided into many regions, but the chief of these is their purgatory, or Valhalla, the abode of Odin, where the souls of the brave or good (for they knew no distinction) are to await the destruction of the world, and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. There sits Odin, his wolves crouched at his feet, and perched upon his shoulders the ravens that bring him daily tidings from "the dull spot that men call earth." Here, in perpetual banquet on the huge wild boar Sceheimnir, cooked by Andhrimnir in the kettle Eldrhumnir, that grows

under the knife, and diluting their meal with huge draughts of mead and ale, sit the heroes, who cut themselves daily into pieces in friendly tournaments.

Heaven itself is overshadowed by a great ash-tree, beneath which the gods sit in council, riding thither daily on horseback over the rainbow-bridge: Odin's horse is distinguished by a double set of legs. Beneath this tree is a fount, and by this fount, tending the tree of life, sit the three Norns, or Destinies. The honeydew of earth is the moisture from this tree.

In heaven is a city, and in that city is a throne; and from that throne Odin discerns the action of men.

In the nine worlds of hell, the wicked are confined in a vast hall, walled round with intertwined serpents, who vomit forth floods of poison. The region of death is dark, and is entered by a bridge covered with gold. It is the realm of Loki, the most wicked and perfidious of immortal deities, sprung of the race of the giants, the brother of that happy family—Death, the wolf Fenris, and the Midgard serpent that encircles the world.

In the latter ages is to come an era of universal misery, of sword and famine, violence and bloodshed: son will murder father, and father With these turmoils nature will sympathise; the earth will be frozen, and the surface be swept by wind, and chilled with snow; there will be three winters, and no summer. Then, collecting his enormous strength, the fettered serpent of the ocean will break his bonds, and the wolf Fenris devour the sun and moon; the earth will be convulsed, and the sea will pour itself upon the land; then will a boat appear, formed of the finger-nails of dead men, in which float the giants; then the stars wither and fall like autumn leaves, and heaven cleaves asunder at the sound of the trumpet that awakens the gods. And even the great ash-tree quivers, when over the rainbow-bridge, which is shattered by their tramp, comes the resplendent army of the gods, headed by Surtur, girt round by flames. Odin appears in his golden armour, and bearing his sunbright sword. Thor attacks the wolf Fenris, but is swallowed by him. Tyr, the northern Mars, attacks the dreadful dog Sarin, and they kill each other. Thor slays the Midgard serpent, but falls dead, suffocated by his venom. Loki and his divine adversary both perish; and finally the wolf Fenris is slain by one of the gods, who, placing one foot in his jaws, having first put on a shoe made of all the shreds of leather saved from the beginning of the world, tears him asunder. Then Surtur breathes forth flame over this great battle of Armagedden, and all is consumed. But soon a new earth and heaven spring from its ashes—the dwellings of the blessed for ever.

Thus briefly, but comprehensively, we have sketched the Scandinavian theogony, containing, as it does clearly, at least some trace of nearly every tradition in the books of Moses. I will now describe their various deities, mere embodiments of divine attributes, and even in their own fables described as subordinate to the great Allfader, or Supreme Being, who, omniscient but invisible, broods like a Nemesis over the rudest of the Saga's legends.

In later story, the Allfader is confounded with Odin, the greatest of the later gods, and who, in the Edda, boasts of forty-nine appellations.

He it is who chooses for his sons those who fall in battle; and this belief in the Norse Pirate, as in the followers of Mohammed or the modern Russian, disarmed death of all its terrors, made the green-turbaned believer expire in rapture, as in imagination he beheld the houris bending to embrace him, and the stern Dane to boast that in the midst of tor-

ture, insupportable by ordinary humanity, he died laughing.

After Odin came Thor-the Mars, as Odin was the Jupiter, of the North. He rode in a car drawn by goats, armed with the belt of strength, his well-known gauntlets, and the mace with which he smote the Frost giants. Baldur (Apollo), whose word is eternal verity, the fairest of the gods, was the son of Odin. The northern Neptune, who unites the powers of Vulcan, is Njord, the god of the mariner and the fisherman; he is represented as delighting only in the cry of the swan and the sea-fowl, and impatient of the mountain and the wolf glen. His wife, a daughter of a giant, like the Grecian Diana, spends her time in the chase, pursuing the bear upon her snow-skates. Of his children is Frey, the god of the seasons, whose wife, Freya, the northern Venus, known by her car drawn by cats, shares with Odin the slain in battle. The god Frey is the most daring and wisest of the gods. He has but one arm, the wolf Fenris having bitten off the other Bregi was the god of poetry, whose wife Iduna guards the divine tree, whose apples confer eternal youth (perhaps a recollection of the tree of knowledge of good and evil). Hemidela, or the white god, whose teeth are of fine gold, guards the rainbow-bridge against the wiles of the giants. He is armed with a horn and a sword; with the former he will give the signal when the last day comes. So watchful is this Argus, that he can even hear the grass growing on the earth, and the wool on a sheep's back.

Of the minor gods, one is blind, another known by his thick-soled

sandals, a third by his skill in archery.

Of the goddesses of the Northmen, some were skilled in healing and others in the arts of love. One is the patron deity of lovers, another of virgins. The nymphs who wait on the warriors in the halls of Odin, and pour out ale and bear round the mead, are those whom Odin sends to the battle-field to give the victory to those whom he favours, and to lead the slain to heaven. The goddess Friga, a wanderer, like Ceres, sought over the world for Odin, whom she had lost, weeping tears of gold.

The legends of the Edda are full of the wars of the Frost giants with the gods, and the wily tricks of Loki and the spirits of evil, who, though overcome, are never destroyed, and will burst forth in mad violence at the last great conflict. Like the Grecian Cyclops, they now lie buried under mountains, and from their convulsions arise storms and earthquakes. The legend of Eurydice resembles that of the northern Baldur,

whom the gods sought to have delivered from hell.

ISABEL MILFORD

AN OLD BACHELOR'S STORY.

A TALE OF THE TIMES.

VI.

The bell for early matins had sounded at the convent of St. M——'s, on the morning after the dismissal given to Lord C—— by the lovely Isabel, and the holy mother had looked in vain among the young devotees for that fair truant; she was nowhere to be seen. A cloud gathered on the haughty brow of the lady abbess, and her lip curled with angry scorn, as she whispered some interrogatory to an elderly-looking nun, whose replies only brought a darker shade upon that would-be placid face, and her whole person became convulsed with some unlovely emotion, which the features too plainly bespoke. In an instant the little chapel was in a stir; a murmur of alarm spread quickly. The abbess could ill restrain her impatience during the hurried performance of that short service. No sooner was it concluded than she left the chapel, and hastened to the dermitory, so lately appropriated to Isabel Milford—but it was vacant!

"Ave Maria!" she exclaimed, devoutly crossing herself; "where can the young heretic have concealed herself?—search must be made in every part of the convent. She cannot have escaped; our daughter's safety is too well cared for," said she, checking the inadvertent acknowledgment of the restraint put upon one who was an acknowledged visitor; "curiosity may, perchance, have led her to indulge in a scrutiny of our arrangements within these walls; doubtless we could have gratified her better had she applied to us for the information she needed."

But many of the sisters returned from their search for Isabel, and assured the abbess she was nowhere to be found. A report was also made to the holy mother that Sister Louise was certainly either dead or in a fit, for she could not be awakened; though the usual hour for her attendance at the Virgin's shrine was passed, the holy image was yet

neglected.

The abbess looked much alarmed; when, just at that moment, sister Clare was brought forward by an elderly nun. She had spread alarm through the convent, by reporting that while performing the penance awarded her—for omitting to cross herself five times instead of four, as she passed the picture of her patron saint yesterday morning, which had been observed by the priest who had ordered that service to be performed—she was met by an angel. She felt so much alarmed, she stated, that she could not speak; but the angel addressed her in these words:

"Fear not, daughter Clare; your penance is accepted—St. Margaret is propitiated; she has sent me to give you her blessing—to bid you be faithful, and to tell you the time is at hand when you shall succeed to

the office Sister Louise now holds."

The angel, she declared, had then passed on in the direction of Sister Louise's cell.

Consternation sat on many faces; but the abbess commanded Sister

Clare to attend her spiritual father, who awaited her in the confessional;

and Clare, with a somewhat reluctant step, obeyed.

The abbess, attended by several of the sisterhood, repaired to the dormitory of Sister Louise. There lay the form of the sleeper, looking like death—grim and ghastly. The abbess took her hand, but it was as cold as ice; she withdrew her own, and that of Louise fell upon the bed corpse-like. Alarm spread in every breast; the priest attended-ordered the use of restoratives-probably she had fainted; many were used without avail; then he shook the poor old woman, not too gently, and called loudly, but to no purpose. It was decided that she was dead. Ghostly offices were now to be performed-a requiem should be chanted for the soul of the departed; but as she had died without receiving priestly absolution, there was some demur as to whether the body was entitled to any of the privileges of the faithful servants of the Church; consequently poor Louise was left for several hours undisturbed by any of those kind offices which would otherwise have been rendered, and it was not until about noon-day that the abbess, attended by the priest (the confessor to the convent) and Father Donald (who had been summoned to be made acquainted with Isabel's extraordinary disappearance), entered the cell of Perhaps they spoke rather louder than usual by a death-bed, but certainly the corpse moved!

"Ha!" exclaimed Father Donald, "the spirit of the departed has been

given to our prayers! behold, she liveth!"

"This is a miracle," said the other priest.

"My daughter, let this be proclaimed among the sisterhood," said Father Donald. "Surely, this will strengthen the wavering faith of some of our erring daughters when they see, and bear witness, that the Church has power to recal the dead to life."

Louise sat up in bed, and stared with surprise; then rubbing her eyes,

said:

"Am I asleep-or where am I-what's all this?"

"Daughter," said Father Donald, calmly advancing, "you have been in the jaws of death; but we have rescued your soul ere it passed into purgatory, and, behold, you are restored to life; rise, and walk."

Louise still stared. "Surely," said she, "I have been in purgatory;

but it was not very fearful, not so great as I had dreaded."

"Doubtless not, daughter; your sainted life would have rescued you from heavy penalty in purgatory; and we have recalled you to us now, for we cannot spare you yet."

"But what have you seen?" said the other priest, with some curiosity.

Louise rubbed her eyes, and looked about her in surprise.

"Surely, an angel stood by me this night in white apparel. She spoke not, but waved to me to follow her; and I rose, and followed to a bright and beautiful garden. All around was sparkling and brilliant; but no sooner did I see this attractive place than I was struck hardly on the shoulders, and I started and looked round, and then I saw a hideous creature, so frightful that even now I fancy I see it grinning at me; and it has done nothing but beat me and duck me into the raging sea all night. And now, Ave Maria! what was it you said? did you tell me I had been in purgatory? have I really been dead?"

"Yes; and we have rescued you from the torments of purgatory.

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VOL. XXIII.

Go, and let your saintly life speak your high privileges; doubtless you will now have more than earthly wisdom. But while you journeyed with the angel, what did you do with the keys of the private entrance? You should have taken them with you; the Virgin would then have rewarded your fidelity, and taken you into that beautiful place you only had a peep at."

"The keys!—the keys! Where are they?—who has taken them?" said she, dragging forth the large pocket from under her pillow. "Ah! indeed, the dark man, who beat me so sorely, had a bunch hanging at

his girdle—they must have been mine."

"Yes, and that is why he beat you for not taking them with you; but now, daughter, can you tell us where that unruly child, daughter Isabel, is? did you see her with the dark man?"

Sister Louise rubbed her eyes, and inquired when she disappeared.

"Before early matin," said the abbess.

"Then indeed it must have been she I saw, enduring the torture of walking on hot irons in purgatory, and she wore a crown of thorns, and on it was written the word 'Heresy.'"

Father Donald nodded approval, and assured Sister Louise there was no doubt she was right, and that the dark gentleman had carried her off

with the keys.

This story soon found belief among the credulous; but there were others less believing, who asserted, in their own silent souls, that the priests had condemned the poor girl to immurement in one of the dungeons for life; and though none dared to breathe their fears, many a heart

mourned the hapless fate of the poor Isabel.

It was necessary to make known the circumstance of her daughter's disappearance to Lady Milford, and this Father Donald undertook to do. He tried in vain to induce her to countenance the belief in the story of Sister Louise. She was indignant with him, and threatened the terrors of English law if he did not restore her daughter. She told him she was certain he knew where Isabel was, and that she would no longer be deceived by him. He had promised faithfully no violence should be used, and now he wanted to persuade her against her senses. In vain he upbraided her want of faith; she insisted on going to the convent, and seeing every cell, every dungeon.

The lady abbess conducted her everywhere she wished, all the time assuring her an angel had carried her daughter away in the night to save her from everlasting perdition. Poor Lady Milford would not be convinced or consoled. She cried aloud for "her child! her darling Isabel! her last hope on earth! her life's joy! her own, own Isabel!" All to no purpose; no voice responded to her call; but as she passed a dark, horribly dark dungeon, still crying loudly for her darling child, a low moan met her ear from within the wall she was passing; frantically she turned, and essayed to tear the brick and mortar down, which she now declared con-

cealed her child.

"She is there!—she is there!" she cried, in shrill earnestness; "give her to me—give me my own precious child. Ye shall not smother her in that wall. Down with it—down with it!" continued she as she forced her fingers in between the bricks, little heeding the blood which streamed from them, while the abbess implored her to desist, offering to take the

most sacred oath, if necessary, to assure her that Isabel was not within the convent walls.

"No, no, vile hypocrites!" cried the poor lady, whose reason now seemed fled; "ye are full of lies, and deceit, and fraud—ye have buried my child alive, I know ye have—oh! oh!" wailed she, wringing her hands.

She would not suffer Father Donald to approach her; if he attempted, she flew at him like a tigress, ready to tear him in pieces, crying out, "Give me my child, vile traitor! restore me my own, own child!"

It would be too harrowing to describe poor Lady Milford's protracted ravings. Suffice to say, that by Father Donald's instance she was kept at the convent, fearing the turn her madness had taken might bring the

She grew very ill, and medical treatment was necessary, but Father Donald did not choose she should return home, and he knew her own medical man would be sure to order her removal from the convent; he accordingly took upon himself the part of Esculapius, and administered opiates. After a time the poor lady seemed to have sunk into a moody silence, and the mental disorder preyed so much upon her bodily frame that there was evident appearance of rapid decline. Poor Lady Milford! she had no husband, no natural protector to inquire into the reasons of her protracted residence at the convent; and it was currently reported among her friends, by the skill of Father Donald, that grief for the loss of her daughter, who had eloped with some low fellow while absent on a visit to a friend, had so affected her ladyship's spirits, that she had determined upon giving up the world and secluding herself at St. M——'s for the remainder of her life.

The house at Ramsgate was let, and the rent duly forwarded to her ladyship at the convent, as were also her small dividends, and the amount of allowance she drew from Sir John. Father Donald instructed her signature to be counterfeited as a harmless fraud, seeing the poor lady could not write in the present unhappy state of her health. As there was no one in the way to oppose, all his plans prospered, and the convent benefited by the money, which of course was not available for the unfortunate insane patient.

Lord C—, angry at being so completely balked in both his hopes of felicity or revenge, departed for Paris, to dissipate his chagrin in the fascinations of that gay city.

VII

THE letter Isabel wrote to her mother, apprising her of her departure to join her father, made no favourable impression on the unfortunate lady's mind; it came too late; total aberration had taken place.

I made Ernest acquainted with Isabel's embarkation, and exhorted him to write to her, telling him that his letters had hitherto been intercepted by the machinations of Father Donald. Little could I have believed the wavering state of his mind at that very time. Mimi seldom suffered him out of her sight; and she had so skilful a coadjutor in Monsieur le Capitaine, that young Montague was almost irretrievably ensnared.

Lord C—— had arrived in Paris, and very soon became aware of Ernest's near neighbourhood. His inveterate feelings towards him,

and his anxiety to avenge himself on Isabel, prompted him to concert measures for the ruin of their happiness. He soon found an adept spy to entrust with the office of watching and reporting to him Ernest's movements and proceedings. In Paris, where the police are in such constant requisition for similar services, nothing could be easier. His first step was to forward an exaggerated account of Ernest's attachment to Isabel. This he contrived to do through female friends. Madame de Beaumaurice, an old flame of his, was intimately acquainted with Mademoiselle Fregier, who had lately gone to reside in Jamaica. This channel of correspondence would enable him, without difficulty, to disturb Isabel's confidence in Ernest's constancy to herself.

Mademoiselle Fregier would be sure to make her acquaintance in the government circle, and Madame Beaumaurice, without naming Lord C——, could apprise her correspondent of her knowledge of an engagement existing between young Montague and Miss Milford, at the same time stating her belief that he was about to break it by uniting himself

to Mimi St. Clair.

Not many weeks after the arrival of Isabel in Jamaica, she received a letter from Ernest. It was not altogether satisfactory to her. True, he spoke of the peril she had lately been in with much concern—of his happiness in hearing of her escape; but yet she fancied she discovered a little constraint; it was not quite what she had expected to receive. He told her of his illness and recovery, of his being in Paris, and of many gay scenes in which he had partaken. She was secretly offended at the pleasurable excitement portrayed, while no one symptom of regret appeared that she had not been by his side, the first and great object of his happiness—such he had often vowed she was; could it then be selfish in her to feel vexed that he could be so joyous without her? Her heart ached as she refolded her letter, and yet she pressed it tightly to her bosom, while a tear stood in her eye. There was one sentence which almost reassured her; it was full of fervent love, and she clung to that as her heart's treasure.

Sir John Milford had received his daughter with unbounded joy; his heart had yearned towards his wife and child, and he had not ceased to regret his hasty separation from one who had ever proved a gentle, loving Earnestly he longed to be reunited to her; but his pride had deterred his making the first advances towards a reconciliation. He believed his wife to have been entirely ruled by her too faithful confidence in a hateful priest, and he now pitied more than he blamed her. He was indignant at the treatment his beloved child had received; but as it had been authorised by her mother, he could not interfere. He now determined to write an earnest appeal to her judgment and her affection, ardently hoping it might have the desired effect of convincing her of the error of blindly submitting to any mortal "conscience-keeper." He also urged her to join him in Jamaica, where, he said, he must of necessity remain for many months at least; having so lately undertaken a command, he could not, except in case of illness, resign, nor ask for leave of absence; and, indeed, he urged upon her the expediency of quitting England for a time, to be out of the power of the Jesuit, of whose deceit he felt sure she must now be convinced. He also wrote to the old bachelor many noble acknowledgments of obligation (which I should

quite blush to recapitulate), and commended his wife to his care, entreat-

ing him to prevail upon her to embark for Jamaica.

Having gained this authority for interference, I repaired to ----shire, and insisted on seeing Lady Milford. I was assured that her state of health precluded the possibility of it; but I would take no refusal, and at length the abbess told me that the interview would avail little, and only cause me pain, for her ladyship's mind was not in a state to recognise friends. Little did the good mother know that the culprit, suspected by Father Donald of assisting to carry off Isabel, stood before her. There's no knowing what she might have done to me if she had! Very much alarmed and distressed as I was at her communication, I yet determinately adhered to my resolution of seeing Lady Milford. We metat first I would fain persuade myself that she was acting a part set her by her spiritual guides, and feigning ignorance of what I said; but alas! the fatal truth too soon revealed itself. Lady Milford, still beautiful-still with that youthful form, that soft melancholy voice-stood before me; but oh, how changed! the mind—the all-powerful attribute of loveliness—was a blank.

She smiled placidly at me as I took her hand; but her eyes looked glassy as she fixed them upon me in a painful stare, which made my

blood curdle as I thought of what she had been, and then was!

I addressed her by her title; but the abbess whispered that she knew herself only as "Sister Marguerite;" but I could not reconcile myself to that name. I ventured to express my regret that she had been ill, and asked if she was quite well again. She replied, pressing her hands to her brow:

"I have a pain-oh! such a swelling pain here! The sun burns me

-scorches me too much-too much-close the window."

I closed it, though the rays of the sun did not penetrate that gloomy apartment, where all looked cold and dull. My heart was bursting with emotion—the tears gathered in my eyes—I turned away to hide them. Silence was oppressive, yet I knew not what to say; at length I spoke:

"I think change of air would be beneficial to you. Will you not like

to return to Ramsgate?"

She started and rose from her seat, coming close to me and whispering

in my ear:

"Did you say Ramsgate? You won't send me there, will you? You look too kind to send me there—it is the gate of purgatory, isn't it? Did you go to see the dragon? he spits fire at me always—I'm afraid of him."

I was foiled. In vain I tried to recal one flash of reason's light upon

the blank page before me.

The abbess cautioned me not to name her husband or daughter, as her ravings would become fearful, and the paroxysms always exhausted her

for days afterwards.

I knew not how to sustain a conversation, so remained silent, and she sat for some time as if unconscious of the presence of any one; suddenly she sprang from her seat, and raising her hand, as if to enjoin silence, she cried, "Hark! Yes, I'm coming—she called me—let me go to her." Then she ran from side to side of the apartment, and at last clasped her hands again to her brow, and gave a low moan. The abbess had risen,

and touched a silver bell on the first appearance of this symptom of

delirium, assuring me that it always preceded her worst fits.

A youthful nun answered the summons, dressed in white, with a guitar in her hand; the superior whispered to me, as the young lady seated herself, and struck some low, deep chords,

"We have found this the only way of pacifying the poor lady."

The nun's voice was melodious, and she sung the following words with a pathos worthy of a better theme:

"Hail, Queen of Heaven! Mary, hail!
Yield me the blessing I implore;
I am thine own—earnest, though frail,
Still thine own child ever more.
Hail, Queen of Heaven! all hail!"

Poor Lady Milford turned to the fair musician and kissed her, saying, "There's a darling, it's very sweet; you are a true saint." And then she took the guitar from her, and busied herself in deliberately unscrewing the strings, and pulling them off, saying, "Take these ugly strings away, how untidy they look;" and would have flung the instrument from her, but the abbess advanced and laid her hand upon it, with a grave, stern look, and my poor friend shrunk from her, and hung her head with childish fear.

"You will like a walk in the garden, sister Marguerite. Daughter, you may attend her," said the abbess, addressing the youthful nun, who

approached, and drew her unresisting arm within her own.

"Come and gather the roses," said she, in a coaxing tone; and Lady Milford assented.

As they were leaving the room, I advanced to say adieu; she whispered:

"Are you going abroad?"

I replied in the negative. She smiled, saying:

"I'm glad of it, for they'd put you in the Inquisition!" And then she laughed wildly, as I turned from her to leave the house with a slow,

reluctant step, and aching heart.

I consulted the most eminent physicians without loss of time; but was disappointed to hear that, unless I could gain the attendance of the fair nun for whom she evinced affection, I should do more harm than good in removing her from the convent; and this, I well knew, was an impossibility. So I relinquished the idea of her removal, though I often visited her, to see if I could trace any favourable alteration in her state of mind.

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THE QUEEN'S LETTER.

AN EPISODE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

VII.

"THE efforts I have made, sir," the queen said, "to obtain the interview from you which you this night so kindly grant, must also prove to you the importance I attach to it. Several times already, and by the aid of some servants who are devoted to me, I had entreated you to be good enough to pay me a visit at my palace of the Tuileries, and I have not forgotten the answer my proposals received. 'A representative of the nation,' you said, ' cannot, dare not, place his foot in the abode of Tyranny.' You see, sir, that Tyranny, no longer hoping to attract you to its dwelling, has decided on quitting it. You also added, ' that you feared to contemplate the luxury of a court and the false trappings of royalty.' Here you have nothing to fear; forget, then, if you will, that you are listening at this moment to the daughter of a queen and the wife of a king; only see before you a woman, very weak, very troubled, and very unhappy. When I speak to you thus, sir, you do not, perhaps, believe me; you, perhaps, represent Marie Antoinette to yourself as a dissimulating, false, and perfidious being, only devoted to pleasure and intrigue, conspiring against the people she ought to protect; an Austrian, in short, on the throne of France. Undeceive yourself, sir, and do not form either so high an idea of my happiness, or so low an opinion of my character. Happiness! ah, if you knew the life I lead, if you knew that this palace of the Tuileries, whose very name annoys and wounds you, is only a vast prison for me, where all those who approach me are gaolers, enemies, and spies! If I speak, my words are watched, taken hold of, and distorted, and in this state launched into the vortex of the world. If I smile—and that is rare, sir—my smile is accused; the most culpable, most senseless meaning is attached to it; they say it is the misery of the people that causes my gaiety, and that their sorrow renders me happy. If I weep, an explanation of my tears is required; they are denounced to the king, to his ministers; I am accused of regretting my fatherland, and of remaining in France, as if in exile. Such is my life, sir; and if I were to descend into details, if I were to tell you, word for word, and one by one, all the paltry sufferings I endure, all the humiliations I undergo, all the pin-thrusts that lacerate me, you would not wish the lowest woman a condition like mine. Listen, sir: a prisoner, whoever she be, whatever crime she has committed, has the right to open from time to time the shutter of her cell, and ask Heaven for a little air, the sun for a little heat—this right I do not possess. Whether the sun rise or set I am no longer permitted to open a window without the wind bearing towards me, with its first breath, an insulting remark, or some brutality which makes me blush. Yes, sir, the artillerymen who watch at the gates of the palace are the first to insult royalty placed under their guard; they do not defend me-they besiege me; and when from behind my curtain I contemplate my clouded horizon, I ever fancy a bullet from the musket of some sentry will pierce my heart. Such is my lot, sir : do you think it worth envying, and do you not find I have paid very dearly for that

frivolity for which I am so bitterly reproached, that infantile effervescence

which they pardon in every woman save a queen?"

In proportion as the queen advanced in the recital of her grief, her emotion increased. Entirely absorbed in the recollection of her recent humiliations, she no longer noticed that the eyes of her hearer had not

ceased for an instant to be fixed upon her.

"And still," the queen continued, in an accent of profound grief, "I remember that the people, who detest and insult me, loved me formerly with enthusiasm. Then my caprices were excused; they were good enough to remember that this very female, who rushed after spectacles and fêtes, had gone alone, on foot and in the snow, to carry bread to the unfortunate! Then the Maréchal de Brissac was able to say to me, without passing for a courtier, when he received me at the gates of Paris: 'Madame, you have around you 80,000 adorers.' Is not the woman who is to-day insulted the same who was formerly idolised? What faults or crimes justify the hatred that pursues me? I am accused of intriguing, of conspiring against the people, of being in league with the enemies of France, of being the king's evil genius. Oh, do not believe it, sir! You ought to know, as your friends have been ministers, that I am powerless, and take no part in what is done. And how could I dream of governing a king when I am scarce permitted to have the charge of my children? Such is the truth, sir; and I should be happy could I succeed in dissipating your suspicions, if you would promise me to use the influence your position and talents give you, in dispelling the clouds which calumny has collected over my whole life. Say, sir, and say truly, that this woman, so outraged, wishes the happiness of the French people with the whole strength of her mind-say she may have been thoughtless, but that she has never conceived the crimes imputed to her, never trusted to foreign support to accomplish her machinations-say, in short, that she is French both in her qualities and her faults. Without ever having seen you, sir, I have so often heard you named, that I am almost acquainted with you; I know that you are an honest man, that you obey your convictions without any after-thought, and that, personally, you neither hate the king nor myself. Such are my reasons for writing to you, sir, at the hazard of destroying myself—such my reasons for speaking to you as a friend. If you can save the king, sir, save him, I earnestly, tearfully entreat you; I ask it in my own name and in that of my poor children!"

Among the merited or undeserved reproaches heaped on Marie Antoinette, that of being a bad mother was never imputed to her. All her maternal tenderness revealed itself in the accent with which she pronounced the words, "My poor children." It seemed as if a secret presentiment warned her of her future destiny, and that she spoke of her children, as she would have to speak later of them, when leaving them to mount a scaffold. However, the man who listened to her did not evince his sympathy by any movement, by any visible emotion; only his eyes, which glittered in the shade, were continually fixed on the queen.

Astonished at having spoken so long without hearing a word of assent or contradiction, Marie Antoinette paused, and turned her glance upon her visitor (which she had not hitherto done). His impassibility terri-

fied her, and, with an instinctive movement, she drew her fauteuil back, which, in the heat of her address, she had involuntarily drawn nearer his.

"Do not retire," said the same hoarse voice, whose feigned accent we have already noticed. "Speak, speak, I am listening to your majesty."

These few words were sufficient to impel the queen once more on the

perilous career she had already partly traversed.

In certain situations women are so little mistresses of themselves, that, spite the secret warnings of their reason, they dare not turn back. The more imprudently they are entangled, the more eager are they to entangle themselves further; the more slippery the path appears to them, the more haste do they evince to arrive at the termination, even if it end in a gloomy abyss. Marie Antoinette had an adventurous turn of mind. During the first years of her reign, she had formed a romance of her royalty, and now that the aspect of events, which had grown dark, should have strengthened her weak mind, she was still the most complete type of those nervous beings who take the hallucinations of their brain for the immutable decrees of destiny. In pleading the cause of the king before a man who did not answer her, she almost fancied she was addressing a whole assembled people, and pleading before all France. This sentiment was so strong, that it once more overcame the terror she commenced

again to feel.

"The king has not yet appointed his ministers in the room of those lately dismissed; it is probable he will command your presence as one of the most important members of the national assembly—and I will advise him to do so. Promise me, sir, to speak to the king, not like a revolted slave in the presence of a tyrant, but like a faithful subject to a monarch who wishes sincerely the happiness of his people. Poor Louis! if you knew as well as I how weak and good he is, how patiently he listens to the counsels that are given him, and even the remonstrances addressed to him! He is reproached for having dismissed from his counsels MM. Roland, Clavière, and Servan; but they forget to add that M. Roland went beyond insolence, before Louis remembered that he was still King of France, and that the nation had not yet pronounced his fall. sir, will speak to the king freely, but without harshness. You will tell him what he must do to recover his lost popularity; you will name to him those he should select as ministers; you will guide him, in short, and be sure he will allow himself to be guided. One word more, sir, and my task is ended. If it be true that it is no longer possible to restore public opinion as regards myself-if, in the reproaches hurled against the king, I am termed the primary cause of evil-if, in short, I am an obstacle to the reconciliation between Louis XVI. and his people-then, sir, I know a method to satisfy passion and disarm rancour. I am ready to sacrifice myself: let the king command, and I will obey.

"When you see him, say to him, sir, 'Whether just or unjust, terrible suspicions weigh on the queen's head; she is accused of turning your majesty's heart from your subjects, and of remembering too well, when on the throne of France, that she first saw light beneath a foreign sky. As long as she is at your side—as long as her influence can be felt in your councils, whether for right or wrong—it will be imagined that your majesty does not follow the dictates of your own heart, but obeys the

suggestions of a hostile policy, of which the queen is the interpreter. An end must be put to these interpretations, which maintain distrust in the minds of your subjects. Sire, let a mighty measure prove to the people that you take their prayers and even their distrust into consideration. Repudiate the queen; send her from you—it must be done.' say this to the king; I authorise you-I entreat you. I will do my best to confirm the advice you give him; I will remind him that the measure proposed does not want precedents in the history of his family. I will supplicate him to permit me to accomplish a weak sacrifice in compensation for the immense results I await from it, and I will add: 'A woman who has already lived too long, compelled to finish her life in exile, a few tears shed, a few regrets stifled, what are these in comparison with the happiness of an entire nation returning to the law of duty, and lovingly bowing beneath the paternal sceptre of its king? then, sire; send me away from you; whatever the conditions you may impose, I will accept them. Even if forced to quit France, and pass the days God will shorten far from you-order, and I will go; and if my absence is feared as much as my presence is detested—if they apprehend that in a foreign land I may aid in effecting the destruction of France, point me out a place of retreat—a prison if you will—and I will resign myself to pass my days in captivity, provided you are happy, Louis, and that your people bless you as formerly.' Such is the design I conceived, sir," the queen continued, after a momentary silence forced on her by the emotion she felt, "and I have calculated on your aid in accomplishing it."

The queen paused after drawing these last words from the lowest depth of her heart; her breath failed her, and tears filled her eyes. This separation—say further, this repudiation which she invoked with clasped hands, the queen, while resigning herself in all sincerity, could not regard without mortal anguish; the heroism of the sovereign gave way to the weakness of the woman. Like Berenice, she understood the necessity of the sacrifice, and proved it; but she wept in proving it. To this poor woman, educated in the centre of a northern puritan and silent court, and who had only commenced to live in France, quitting France was death. Still Marie Antoinette only yielded for a moment to the sweet impressions of the vision which her happy days that had long disappeared, summoned up; and, in order to force a positive answer from her silent hearer, she offered him her hand, saying, as she did so:

"Well, sir, will you aid my project? will you become one of our friends?"

These words, and this appeal from a royal hand, produced a violent effect on the queen's silent visitor. He rose suddenly, and, lowering himself to a level with the hand the queen offered him, he pressed his lips upon it, murmuring in a faltering accent a single word, which, however, spoke volumes:

" Marie!"

Then, without giving the queen time to express her astonishment, he rose up, threw back the collar of his coat, unfastened the strings of his cap, and revealed to the eyes of the queen an inflamed countenance, which was no other than the man's whose agent Panotet had constituted himself from the commencement of the evening.

At the sight of this man, the queen's first movement was to withdraw her insulted hand, and conceal it behind her. At the same time, her face grew frightfully pale; she attempted to rise, but remained fixed to her chair, dumb and overwhelmed. For his part, the man who had just caused the queen such a violent surprise, sought to regain his coolness, and calm his slightly agitated features. Upright, but motionless, he continued to keep his eye firmly fixed on the half-fainting queen, and waited. He waited thus during a minute, without moving a step or pronouncing a word; and when the queen eventually reopened her eyes, regained her voice, and said to him,

"You here, sir!"

He contented himself with bowing his head in assent, and crossed his arms across his chest, as if to form a barrier for his conscience against those recriminations, whose justice he doubtless recognised, and whose bitterness he foretasted.

"You here!" the queen repeated, in a firm voice this time, and looking her visitor in the face, with a courage probably inspired by the recollection of her mother, Marie Thérèse, "and how have you come here, sir, in the place of him I expected. Has he sent you? Do you come from your leader?"

By emphasising these words, the queen wished to prove that she had already recovered from the terror which had, for a moment, over-

powered her.

"Your mere presence here," she continued—"your mere presence tells me plainly there is some snare, some infamous machination to destroy me; but I desire to know if you have an accomplice, and for what price he sold me."

"I am the only culprit," the man said; "you may believe me. But I do not see the necessity of teaching you the method I employed to introduce myself into this house. How I came here is of no consequence; but why I am here is really important, and this I will explain to your majesty."

Here the stranger paused, like a man who has lost his way in a mountainous country, and draws breath before leaping a ravine; then he

uttered these three words, with a gloomy energy:

"I love you."

On hearing this declaration, Marie Antoinette trembled on her seat, an indignant blush spread over her whole face; but on this occasion it was not terror that prevented her from speaking. With head erect, and dilated nostrils, she leapt from her chair, threw the folds of her dress behind her, as she would have done with her royal mantle, and merely said, accompanying her answer by a superb gesture:

"Leave me, sir!"
The man did not stir.

"Leave me!" the queen repeated.

"You forget, madame," the man replied this time, with a smile, "that you are not in your palace, and that you have no dragoons to execute your commands. I must beg you to remember that, on entering this room, I closed the door myself, and by doing so, wished to establish the right I took of remaining near your majesty as long as I pleased to stay."

"And you of course insist on compelling me to hear a second time the declaration of your love," said the queen, laying a marked stress of disgust on the latter word; "but know, sir, that if, instead of being Queen of France, I were only a little bourgeoise, I would give you the same answer I do now—I can only feel contempt towards you, sir: you

see I do not go so far as hate."

"This woman is incorrigible," the man murmured between his teeth; and then added, in a louder key, "Are you so slightly acquainted with your situation, that I am compelled to explain it to you? Do you wish to force me to tell you that it only depends on myself to make you pay a bitter penalty for your disdain. Yes, it is my right to be proud, and yours to be humble—mine to command, yours to obey. Listen to me, earnestly. I learned this evening that Madame la Princesse L—— was commissioned by you to bear an autograph letter to a deputy of the national assembly: I also know that this letter passed from the hands of the princess to those of a workman, who was to carry it to the address. Hasten to Grandet, immediately remove him from his dwelling by some pretext—gain over his porter—instal myself in his cabinet—take his name, and play his character: that is what I determined to do, and what I did."

Although the queen had felt from the first she was on the verge of a precipice, still she had not believed in such a thoroughly organised plot. Thus she could not prevent a shudder as she sobbed out:

"He has a letter."

"Yes, madame, I have your letter," the traitor continued; "and this is so true, that I can at this very moment, and without consulting the original, repeat you the contents, word by word:

"SIR,—That you may no longer doubt the desire I entertain for an interview with you, I write to you with my own hand, at the hazard of destroying myself, if ever this letter were known; I must speak with you this evening, sir; for I am very miserable and very unhappy. Come, then, and believe in the sincerity of your affectionate,

"MARIE ANTOINETTE."

When the stranger had repeated this letter, he added:

"The place and hour follow, marked in pencil by your friend and confidante, the Princess L—; but the body of the note is, in fact, entirely in your handwriting. And now, madame," he continued, after a deliberate pause, "will you still overwhelm me with your disdain? Will you still refuse me the right of telling you that I love you?"

HOW CORNET SEYMOUR WON A WIFE.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

T

"GONE! quitted town! and you not know their destination!" exclaimed Frank Seymour, in a tone of vexation and disappointment to the old woman who was left in charge of Mr. Worthington's house in Sackville-street as he twisted between his finger and thumb a superb bouquet, totally regardless of disturbing its artistic and symbolic arrangements, or even thinking of the capital which he had just invested in it. "What on earth could have occasioned this abrupt departure?" he continued, without waiting for a reply. "Have you no idea of the route which they have taken? Are you not to forward their letters? Surely you did notice the address on their trunks?"

"Yes, I did, sir; they are gone to the waters."

"What! to Germany?" "Oh no, sir, to Malvern."

"To Malvern! why did you not tell me so at first?"

"Because you did not ask me, sir."

"Why, you said that you knew nothing of their destination."

"Craving your pardon, sir, I did not say any such thing, for you did

not give me time to answer you, your questions came so fast."

"Well! perhaps they did. But you have no notion of the shock your information caused me—so unexpected; but, after all, for what are they gone to Malvern?"

"For master's gout. He has just bought a fine flourishing book about some wonderful cures performed by a great doctor there; whereas, sir, if he would but think less of his dinner, and keep his temper more, he need not go from home for a remedy."

"Very true, no doubt. But did Miss Worthington leave no message? no note? Did she not wish to send word to any one of her sudden

flight?"

"No, sir, she only had a moment like to spare to write a few flurried lines, for master gave the word of command to be off, bag and baggage, as soon as he had determined to go."

"Where is that precious note?"

"Good gracious me! sir! where should it be but in my pocket; and where it shall be till called for, as they say at the post-office.

"Well! it is called for, for I am positive that it is for me." "For you! no such thing! it is for Captain Seymour."

"I'm Captain Seymour."

"You a captain? why, you don't look old enough for a sergeant; besides, there's not a bit of honour and glory about you-no sword, no

"That's because I'm not on duty. The note is for me, I do assure

you, so pray torture me no longer with suspense."

"Well! you're mighty impatient; but if you are Captain Seymour, why here it is."

Frank flung down the bouquet, seized the note, slipping a shilling

into the withered but grasping hand of the antique messenger of love; and, as she closed the door, he, still on the steps, opened the dear little billet of Miss Lucinda Worthington, and literally devoured its contents on the spot, which was, however, no very gluttonous effort of mental gastronomy, as it merely imparted "the annoying resolution of her papa to try the Malvern waters for his horrid gout, and entreating Captain Seymour not to attempt following her there, as, if he were to be detected, she should be ruined."

"And if I do not follow," soliloquised Frank, folding up the note, "I shall be ruined; that is, if there be any more ruin in a fellow like me; for, involved as I already am, it must be a deuce of a desperation which could plunge me deeper into the vortex of destruction! So follow I must, impelled so to do as much from affection as necessity; for, although I did certainly commence the little affair du cœur simply from self-interest, I feel confident, if I am so fortunate as to terminate it at all, it will be from an interest of a more laudable kind; for the fair and confiding Lucinda, armed with the most potent weapon which woman ever wields, that total absence of suspicion which stamps the man a villain who betrays it, has conquered the selfish calculation which want, the offspring of dissipation, had affiliated to a really not absolutely ungenerous nature.

"But to descend from these heroics," he continued, as he walked away, after vainly searching for his bouquet, which the old woman had slily picked up before she entered the house, fancying that he would never miss it in the absorbing delight of Miss Worthington's note, "how am I to follow?—'that is the question!' Where am I to find the ways and means for such a journey, and all its succeeding contingencies ?- 'there's Let me then soberly and dispassionately review the state of the exchequer-let me for once commune with myself without flattery and without delusion. What money have I in hand? And how can I appropriate that money to my own peculiar advantage, without injuring that of others? My present effects are fifteen pounds sterling, and my present liabilities are fifteen post-obits, each at two hundred pounds, which amount to three thousand pounds sterling, when paid! Now, although said fifteen pounds are the precious remains of the last hundred sent by the governor in a moment of remorseful paternal weakness, to stop an arrest, and save my commission and character, shall I muddle them away ignominiously by paying a rascally bootmaker, or shall I, like a skilful goldbeater, endeavour to render them so malleable as to spread them over a surface extending from the Great Metropolis to Great Malvern? Why, like a second Jason, I might find it the Colchis which contained my golden fleece! What a golden idea! how brightly it gilds the horizon of my future !- 'It marshals me the way that I was going!' So, now to obtain leave for a month, find them out, find out old Worthington's antipathies, play upon them-play upon them, what a miraculous suggestion! Lucinda told me that the sound of a kettle-drum drove him frantic-that he fled from lodgings embracing every other worldly comfort, because an amateur on that warlike instrument would practise morning, noon, and night. If I have a talent, it is for the kettle-And if I do not contrive to favour Mr. W. with a specimen of that talent, the fault shall not be mine, but in the Fates, who are averse

to reward merit. Oh, Fortune! for once smile upon a poor devil. To win such a wife 'is a consummation devoutly to be wished.' To win? why, the most insurmountable obstacles are already overcome; for it is a great fact, that the heart of Lucinda is in my possession; and, as the hand is said to be native to the heart, it must be mine as well, as a matter of course—cela va sans dire!"

Frank easily obtained a month's leave; he easily wrote a polite note to his importunate bootmaker, urging most important business obliging him to hurry into the country, and promising immediate payment of his small account on his return to town; and he easily packed up his Russia-leather tient-tout, and as easily took his seat on the box of the Worcester High-flyer, by the side of the most intelligent of coachmen, and, what between the political and vernal state of the country (the apple orchards being in full bloom), he contrived to kill time most agreeably, and find a charming appetite on reaching the Queen's Head, Worcester.

II.

"O Jephthah, king of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!" exclaimed Hamlet; and when asked by Polonius, "What treasure, my lord?" replied, "One fair daughter." Such was the treasure possessed by Mr. and Mrs. Worthington; for their one daughter was fair indeed!—fair in the beauty of youth and innocence—fair in the beauty of hope that never had yet proved illusory—fair in the early dawn of that love which so seldom attains its meridian unclouded by the brooding tempests which afterwards obscure its brilliancy—unchilled by the "sneaping frosts" which nip the

blossoms of the heart in their odorous blowing!

It can readily be imagined how such a creature was idolised, indulged, adored, and even spoiled by parents who could afford to gratify her every wish, and who religiously believed that they, and they only, were specially favoured by Providence in this "sole daughter of their house and heart." It is true that hitherto the chief desires of their child had almost entirely coincided with their own; hence, opposition amongst them had rarely been thought of; and it had never yet seriously occurred to any one of the unanimous trio that anything could ever happen to interrupt the domestic harmony of the somewhat monotonous routine of their uneventful lives. But, by the merest chance, in the most purely accidental way, as is constantly the case in all similar introductions, Lucinda had met Frank Seymour at the house of a mutual friend, had met him more than once, had met him several times, yet it was always quite unpremeditated that he was either at Mrs. Howard's when she called, or dropped in immediately after; she never made an appointment with him -never! nor did he once presume to solicit so indecorous an act of condescension on her part. Indeed, it would have been superfluous, for he had the privilege of the entrée so unrestrictedly at Mrs. Howard's, that his mornings were principally spent in her elegant boudoir, and his evenings in her even more elegant drawing-room, drawn thither by the subtle attraction of the loving and loveable Lucinda.

Frank could sing passablement—Lucinda, divinely; duets, therefore, had to be practised. Frank was fond of walking; Lucinda thought it beneficial to her health; so it was no wonder that he occasionally

escorted her home of an evening after those dangerously fascinating duets; and how slowly they sauntered along !- how did they linger out those delicious strolls to the very verge of colds and catarrhs !- how did they look into each other's eyes, so softened in their expression beneath the calm moonlight! Frank was handsome to an eminent degree; and Lucinda was beautiful to a degree approaching the angelic; so, when thus put into "rapport" one with the other, like mesmerists, they were insensibly but inextricably attracted; learning to love without being in the slightest cognisant of the startling fact, until the veil was rudely rent from their hearts by Mr. Worthington's sudden inclination for the waters of Malvern; disclosing the real state of their affections; and then the artless Lucinda, oppressed with ingenuous shame and self-upbraiding. shrank from Frank, shrank even from herself, shedding those secret and bitter tears which are ever wrung from the young heart by love, at last; and then she made that resolution to give up Frank for ever, which was broken the instant after by her writing that note to him, which determined him never to resign her; but to follow her, not only to Malvern, but to John O'Groat's, or even to a more remote end of the habitable globe, if necessary.

Mrs. Worthington had frequently objected to her daughter's constant visits to Mrs. Howard, and to the late hours which those visits induced; for, with a woman's prescient tact, she could not help imagining that there was a motive beyond her passionate predilection for music, to make her so eager to go, so reluctant to return; but Mr. Worthington, rendered selfish, and even morose by excessive pain, and more irritable than the proverbially-irritable martyrs of gout invariably are, to avoid what he designated the nuisance of the eternal strumming essential to proficiency now-a-days, on the harp or piano, overcame all the scruples of

his wife with the cutting remark:

"Let her give up music, then. It was your own conceit and whim, Mrs. W., that I should fool away hundreds upon it, constantly dinning into my ears the imperativeness of our daughter being accomplished—our daughter being able to compete with her betters—our daughter certain thereby to secure an eligible match—as if you did not marry well without knowing a note of music, how many parts of speech there are, or even simple addition! And now that Lucinda does begin to play decently, you wish to throw difficulties in the way of her arriving at perfection, by suggesting I don't know what of danger and indiscretion. Just like all women! What harm can possibly come to her from going to Mrs. Howard's?—a widow, as she is, without incumbrances—neither son, brother, nor cousin."

"But she may have friends."

"Friends! well, suppose she has; must they become the friends of Lucinda? Once for all, then, there she goes to practise, or she never shall touch an instrument again. I see no use in it—never did. We aim at educating our children in a superior manner to ourselves; and for what?—that they may despise us for our ignorance. I detest what is called the development of intellect; I do, most thoroughly; for, what is its general result but contempt of feminine occupations, domestic duties? Many a woman who can astonish in a sonata, cannot stitch a wristband, or even sew a button on it!"

"But Lucinda can do everything. She can blend the useful with the

"What, season a kidney-pudding? God help the man who trusts to her for a savoury dinner! But, about this confounded music; have you any reason for your fears? for I am not going to disturb my mind prematurely on account of some confounded vagary or other of yours; I have enough to bear without that, distracted as I am by continual

agony; unpitied, too, as I am."

"How unkind of you to say that you are unpitied. If pity could spare you from suffering, William, you would never feel another pang.' And Mrs. Worthington dried a tear, for she was truly sensitive, and could not get accustomed to the harshness of her husband, although she could palliate it on the score of the racking tortures which she was aware that he more or less writhed under; her sole endeavour being, when his temper was so ungovernable, never to allow her darling child to be the victim of it too, but to keep her mind and heart fresh, buoyant, and cheerful, so long as in her power, confident, that as a woman, her own time of trial would inevitably arrive; and she regretted having provoked the little disagreeable discussion with her husband about the music; but a perceptible change in Lucinda had naturally alarmed her maternal watchfulness; she hoped, however, that there was nothing serious in it, or, if there should be, new scenes, and new excitements, with her old tenderness, and her father's unlimited affection, when he was free from pain, would restore her to her wonted gaiety and heedlessness; and she really hailed the trip to Malvern with extreme satisfaction on that account.

III.

"Well! come! this is comfortable, Susan," exclaimed Mr. Worthington, as, seated in a large easy-chair by the open window of the drawingroom of the very best apartments to be found in Malvern, feeling the genial air from its fine bracing hills fanning his feverish cheeks-"this is elysium! here I shall find the tranquillity so important to my health, so requisite to soothe the irritation of my nerves."

"I shall be devoutly thankful, William, if you do derive the benefit

which you anticipate.'

"No other lodgers, my dear, that's what I look at; the house, as it were, all to ourselves; only a widow with two sons, and they out the whole day with their donkeys; and glad to get to bed early at night, as she says, completely tired out."

"Such stillness will hardly be a recommendation for long, I fear."

"What, not after the annoyance which we experienced last autumn from that confounded drum, Mrs. W.? Oh, how, even although miles off, did it seem to follow us from place to place. Asleep, I heard it in my dreams; awake, it echoed in my very heart. People are said to be insensible to the ringing of church bells, to the firing of royal salutes, or any other tremendous sounds, in time; but no time could ever make me not hear that drum, either in reality or imagination. How often have I sighed to exclaim with the poet:

> Not a drum was heard! 28

No poor wretch drummed out of his regiment was ever more stunned with the cursed 'rub-a-dub-dub' than I have been!"

"And sorry enough I was for you, and earnestly do I hope that you may never be so annoyed again,"

"Annoyed so again, Mrs. W.? It is not probable that I ever shall. Two such fiends in human shape could not be produced in the same era. What, two amateurs on the kettle-drum to fall in my way? the idea is as preposterous as it is horrible."

"I did not say that it was probable, William; but Mrs. Dexter has

more rooms to let, and-

"Ah, there you are; a regular Job's comforter; and so, because she has a spare room or two still on hand, it must, of course, follow, according to your lucid style of reasoning, that she will let them to some cursed drum-major, or other noisy rascal?"

"There, pray do not be angry; passion, you know, is so injurious to

your complaint.

"And, aware as you are of that, Mrs. W., you affectionately contrive

to get up three or four impromptu fits per diem for me!"

"Well, here comes Lucinda; so do not let us be quarrelling, pray. Why, darling," continued the admiring mother to her daughter, who now entered the room from a walk, "you already look the better for change of air; your dear cheeks will soon regain their lost bloom, now you are away from that stifling London."

"Ah, ma! it's very dull here, though."

"Oh, do not begin to despair yet; there may be a ball or concert, perhaps, soon; and, by-the-by, that reminds me that we had the imprudence to leave the trunk containing your sweetest dresses upside down; so let us go and unpack it directly, and hang them up; papa can get a nap while we are gone."

"So he can, and that will do him such good. Do try, dear papa."

"Whether papa gets a nap or not," grumbled Mr. Worthington, as the two ladies hurried off, "matters very little to either of you, now you have your finery to engross you. I do really believe that if the end of the world were at hand, if the millennium were actually established upon earthnay, if my wife and daughter were summoned by an angel to paradisethey would wish, if possible, to carry with them even there their love of a bonnet, their duck of a cloak. No wonder that Eve, woman like, sinned for the sake of dress, although but of fig-leaves; for that is the only passion of the sex! Not one thought will either of them give to my aches and pains now; not one order for dinner has Mrs. W. yet given, I'll venture to say; not she! So, ill as I am, I must see to that; or, when five o'clock comes, we shall have nothing to eat. Mrs. Dexter assured me that she could cook capitally, having formerly lived in the family of a nobleman in that capacity. I wonder whether this place is celebrated for anything besides water? That I shall soon discover, and her skill in cooking too!"

And while Mr. Worthington matured this grand discovery-while Mrs. Worthington and Lucinda unpacked those precious dresses, shook out their flounces, bewailed over their horrid creases, and raised their eyes above, as if to inquire of the heavens, or the ceiling, "why those cruel creases should be there," we will just hark back, as they say in

sporting phraseology, to Frank and his movements, whom we left most voraciously ready for "one mutton to follow the other, hot off the gridiron," at the Queen's Head Hotel, Worcester; where, after dinner, a peep at the Times, three glasses of whisky-punch, and cigars ad libitum, he slept—and, like a top! The next morning he proceeded to Malvern, got on the scent of the Worthingtons, followed it up, and fairly run into them at Mrs. Dexter's; who, at the moment that Mr. Worthington rang the bell to consult her respecting what fish was to be had, she was protesting to Frank that "she durst not let her front parlour to so young a gentleman, for that she had a most particular old one in her first floor, and who only took her apartments on condition that the house was kept as quiet as a nunnery."

"Well, but, my dear madam," expostulated Frank, "it is not that I cannot be quiet because I have the misfortune to be so juvenile! only try me. I, too, have come here for calm, for solitude, for study. I must have retirement—I must have repose, for I have a problem to

solve of the most immense magnitude."

"Well, sir, if I thought-"

"You may think, and what you please, for here must I take up my rest."

"But do your boots creak, sir? Mr. W. told me, the first thing, to

soap the hinges of the doors, because they did."

"Lucky for you, then, that the duty has just been taken off soap! My boots do not creak—I have no cough—do not even sneeze more explosively than a kitten—so, the devil's in it if I can disturb Mr. what did you call him?"

"Worthington, sir-Worthington. And with such a beauty of a

daughter."

"Has he? But that's quite immaterial to me, as I am married."
"Married, sir! Oh, I have no accommodation for another lady."

"Oh, my wife is not coming."

"Well, in that case But hark how he is ringing that poor bell,

as if the wire had no feeling!"

"Well, while you go and endeavour to convince him that it has, or, at all events, that you are not deaf, I will go and send in my few things. Not a word up-stairs, mind, that you have let your parlour, or some of the family might, out of politeness, wish to cultivate my acquaintance, and that would not suit my book."

"No; trust me for that, sir. But is it a novel or a history?"

"What?"

"Your book."

"Oh! my book. No; a biography—my own life before I am dead."

"La! how wicked! But there's the bell again!"

IV.

"WELL!" said Lucinda, half aloud, as, after glancing from the bedroom window at the clear blue heavens, her eyes gradually descended from the celestial altitude down to the lowest depths of the street, "if ever I beheld Captain Seymour, I see him now!" as Frank, unconscious of that precious and perplexed gaze, walked towards the coach-office

with the light elastic step of that buoyant hope which has just attained fruition. "Then he has had the rashness to follow me, poor fellow! I must put him on his guard instantly; love makes him so incautious! My best way will be to find out from Mrs. Dexter what business brought him to her house; for out of it, I am most positive, he went only this moment."

"There, dear!" said Mrs. Worthington, as she laid the last Honiton lace collar smoothly in Lucinda's top drawer, "nothing is hurt by the journey; so, while you make yourself a little tidy for dinner, I will go and see how papa is getting on, for he has been wonderfully patient, for him, not to have sent for one of us long ago."

As soon as she heard her mother close the drawing-room door, Lucinda, fearing to lose a moment, slipped softly past it, and, too much agitated for ceremony, entered Mrs. Dexter's front parlour without knocking.

"Oh dear, miss, how you startled me to be sure!" exclaimed Mrs. Dexter, ceasing her table-rubbing. "I declare you tread as light as a fairy, miss, and look like one as well! I never heard you come in."

"I ought to have knocked, Mrs. Dexter; it was very rude of me not to do so, but I was in such a hurry to learn who the gentleman was who has just been here."

"What gentleman, miss?"

"Why, a handsome-looking military gentleman. I fancy I know him."

"That's impossible, miss; for he has no knowledge of you, nor even of your name."

"Well! a gentleman has been here then."

"Oh, miss! if you will but be secret! if you will but be charitable! Just these few months are our harvest, and I am but a lone widow, with two poor helpless sons, and this is such a nice parlour, with a good thick old-fashioned ceiling, so your papa cannot hear a sound through it; and the gentleman begged so to have it, for he loves quiet. He is come here to write a book—his own life, miss."

"What! Frank!"

"He told me so, miss; but do not betray me to your pa, pray; he is quite alone; his wife is not coming."

"Whose wife?"

" My new lodger's, miss."

- "His wife! Captain Seymour married!" cried Lucinda, sinking into a chair; "oh, the cruel, perfidious monster! But there must be some mistake. Now, Mrs. Dexter, you have asked me not to betray you, and on one condition I promise not to do so, which is, that you do not betray me. There is some mystery about your new lodger which I must have time to unravel; do not, then, say that I know him, do not even hint at this interview, do not allude to me, or to the questions which I have just made respecting him; for oh, Mrs. Dexter, if he is married he is a villain!"
- "God bless me, miss, I am quite amazed; but those soldier officers are never to be trusted."

"But he is, I am certain."

"Well, miss, you called him a villain yourself, and I only agreed with you

out of compliment. I hope I shall not be forced to call him a villain too."

"Oh, do not apprehend such a calamity; I will be answerable for him; I spoke without reflection. But I must go, or I shall be surprised with you, perhaps; keep my secret, dear Mrs. Dexter, and I will keep yours."

"Dear young lady," said Mrs. Dexter, as she closed the door after Lucinda, "in love, I'll be bound. Deceived by this captain—well, that's no concern of mine. Deceitful enough in him to pretend not to know them, though. But, as she knows him, I need not fear; so, while they are at dinner, I'll just change the chair-covers and carpet; those harum-scarum young officers are never the wiser. But to pretend to come here to write a book! Shameful. Yet she may be mistaken; she must be mistaken, for he looked as innocent as an unweaned babe when I mentioned the name of Worthington—no fluster, no colouring up to the eyes! No! my new lodger is not her captain, I am sure. However, I shall have my

eyes on him, and shall soon see who he does belong to."

Lucinda, as a matter of course, could eat no dinner, and, although her father could, he still declared that "it quite took away his poor bit of an appetite to see her despising good food so;" while her mother was seriously uneasy at her inability to enjoy or relish anything at table; but Lucinda scarcely heeded her tender solicitude, her every faculty being stretched to a torturing degree of tension to catch the remotest intimation of the entrance of Frank into the parlour below. At length she did hear a bustle, an opening and shutting of doors, a striking of boxes against the edges of the stairs as they were being carried up to the "nice airy attic, which always went with the front parlour;" and then, to her horror, she distinctly heard the voice of Frank telling Master Dexter, who was acting as porter, " to be rather more careful of his portmanteau, which happened to be a new one," for she saw her mother flush and her father start as the gentlemanly tones penetrated through the keyhole; but, as neither of her parents made any remark, she bent over her plate to hide her own confusion from them, glad to pretend to eat, to divert their attention from the rumbling overhead.

But, as soon as she went to her room, under the sick heart's never failing plea of a bad headache, whither she was immediately followed by her anxious mother, Mr. Worthington again made one of his forcible appeals to the bell to summon Mrs. Dexter to his august presence; and what transpired between them on the occasion will be understood by her as promptly as she could rushing into the front parlour, exclaiming to

Frank,

"Oh, sir, the fright that I have had on your account !"

"What fright, pray?"

"Why, sir, Mr. Worthington declares that he heard a strange man's voice, and so to pacify him I said it was my brother's, sir."

"Your brother's! What, pass me off, an officer of dragoons, for your brother?"

"Well, sir, if you are offended you must go, for he is my best lodger; and father was in the dragoons, too."

"Was he! Oh, if you are in the service, my dear madam, it quite alters affairs! What was your father?"

"A full corporal, sir."

"Bless me! he was high in rank, indeed! Well, but now to more important matters, Mrs. Dexter. I have not dined yet—what can I have?"

"Anything you please, sir, almost. Duck and green peas—chicken and asparagus—smelts—"

"Oh! a chop will do for the first day-less trouble."

"They pay ready money here, sir; people come and go so, like!"

"An excellent plan. I should wish to adopt it! Lay in all you may think necessary, and lump the whole together, there's a good creature. I can trust you."

"But, sir, can I trust you? we are such strangers."

"What! your own brother a stranger! how truly unnatural of you."
"Ah, sir! you are fond of a joke, and a merry man never was really a rogue in grain. I will trust you."

"Do, you shall have no reason to repent of your confidence."

"Not a glimpse have I caught of Lucinda yet," mused Frank, as Mrs. Dexter, after begging half an hour to prepare his dinner, disappeared; "but I could hardly expect it. I think I have accomplished marvels to be in twenty-four hours under the same roof! What will she say when she knows it? I long to hear her—'Oh, Frank, how foolish!" But, as I live, I hear her step! Now, at the risk of a most awful shriek, followed by total insensibility, and the being borne in these trembling arms and stretched upon that sofa, see her I will—speak to her I will,

Though hell itself should gape, and bid me hold my peace!"

and, suiting the action to the word, he opened the door just as Lucinda was gliding by it, as she hoped, unheard. But no shriek resounded through the house—no fainting prostrated her on the floor of the passage—but, with a bright blush mantling her cheeks, and with a proud, indignant flashing of the eye, she was going to sweep past the astonished Frank, when he caught her hand, exclaiming, "Lucinda!"

"Sir! Captain Seymour!"

"Ma'am! Miss Worthington!"

"Oh, Frank!"

"Oh, Lucinda! what is the meaning of this?"

"Ask your own heart—ask your own conscience."
I will, if you will only step into my parlour."

" Me!"

"Pray, pray do! only for one instant."

"Well, then, just for curiosity!"

"Now, Lucinda, what is the meaning of this caprice—this fickleness? Are you displeased at my coming to Malvern?"

"If Mrs. Seymour is not, sir, why should I be?"

" Mrs. Seymour! Who's that?
"Your wife, sir—your wife!"

"Oh, I see! Mrs. Dexter has told you that I am married, then?"

"You must excuse me for enduring your impertinences any longer,

sir; I must leave you to your own reflections."

"Not until I have convinced you what those reflections are," replied Frank, drawing her towards a pier-glass. "There, Lucinda, there—there are my reflections! my constant reflections, for my heart, like this mirror,

faithfully reflects those lovely and adored features, and will—faithless though yours may be—to the day of my death! As to the fiction of my marriage, it was one of those sudden and improbable inventions of which a fellow readily avails himself for a pis aller, who finds himself at the end of his wits to extricate himself from an unforeseen dilemma."

"Oh, I am so glad!" cried Lucinda, involuntarily springing towards the arms which, as involuntarily, opened to embrace her; "I am so glad, Frank! But I ought not to be, for papa never will let me marry an

officer, I am sure."

"We must compel him, dear."

"Oh, that will be impossible; he is so obstinate, you cannot think."
"Love laughs at impossibilities! Love ridicules obstinate papas!
Love delights in difficulties! Love always conquers all!"

"Ah! you are so terribly sanguine, Frank! that is the worst of you."

"You inspire that resilience from despondency, that recoiling from despair. Who would not be sanguine who had the remotest chance of winning such a prize? I have a scheme, dear—I have a charming scheme——"

"What scheme, Frank-what scheme? Do, pray, tell me."

" No, no, no; be ignorant of the knowledge, dearest chuck, until-

Hear it not, Duncan; for 'tis a knell Will summon thee to heaven, or to—

a place never mentioned to ears polite!"

"Ah, you madcap thing! I would make you tell, but have no time now, for go for a walk I must, as mamma says she can always perceive by my colour whether I have been out or not, and can always scent a perfume like new-mown hay hanging about my curls when she kisses me

after returning."

"Dear and discerning mamma! sweet and beautiful child!" exclaimed Frank, with intense emotion. "Oh, Lucinda! I am quite of her opinion. Your cheeks are tinged by the amorous zephyrs with the true 'celestial rosy-red; the pure and eloquent blood' does, indeed, speak in them, up-welling from a pure and gentle heart! There is a fragrance breathed over those rich clustering curls by the soft airs of twilight which do permeate one's whole being when approaching you after you have been walking, love. Go, then, dearest, and as soon as possible I will join you, to inhale the odour which intoxicates, until the brain reels with a too exquisite rapture!"

"Oh, no, not this evening. I am not known here yet; and to be rambling over these hills with such a distingué-looking cavalier might

provoke observation for me."

"And would most certainly provoke envy for me, my sweet! So, for your sake, I will not enforce that triumph; my thoughts, however, will

go with you."

"And mine will—mais n'importe, you are so vain that I tremble to flatter you. I can even see, by your saucy glance, that you fancy they will stay with you; but, mon ami, vous vous trompez most wofully." And with a coquettish twirl of her light blue parasol, Lucinda tripped gaily away.

"I know better-I know better. I do not deceive myself," murmured Frank, gazing from the window after her until he made her "as little as a crow;" "every thought will be mine, Miss Lucinda Worthington—every guileless and passionate thought; for an advocate goes with you that will plead for me—that will be heard—that will claim your every dear and precious thought for me!"

V

THE lamb-chops were excellent, the new potatoes firm and waxy, the mint-sauce sweetened to a nicety, the bottom of the Stilton cheese just in a state to relish the pale ale, which was drank by Frank, in open defiance of the deadly infusion of strychnine, or the necessity of Professor Liebig's printed testimony that gents might imbibe, and even copiously, the exhilarating beverage without the fear of its producing sudden apoplexy, or any other injurious effects, save and except exciting the thirst it affects to allay. In fact, Frank had dined most satisfactorily; and with his pint of sherry before him and a devilled biscuit, he was calmly subsiding into himself, as a man naturally does when "good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both;" and he unrestrainedly gave way to the smiling, half drowsy reverie which a full stomach, and a still, warm room induce, at first thinking of Lucinda, and fancying that he could detect the aroma of her wind-kissed ringlets; and then his mind reverted rather more seriously, but by no means dejectedly, to his present precarious position, and the smallness of his funds to establish it on a more solid basis, feeling that if ever delay was dangerous, it was eminently so to a lover reduced to a few pounds, and those not absolutely his own, and not knowing how long it might be before the fortress would capitulate. "If I had but the cash," he mentally ejaculated, "I should not care how long it stood out, for, after all, the greatest pleasure is in the pursuit of an object, and not in its attainment; but that is a luxury only to be indulged in by those who do not rise up in the morning with the fear of retiring to rest in one of her most gracious Majesty's dormitories. What honourable atrocity would I not be guilty of, to touch the tin of which, alas! I stand so much in need!"

"These two gentlemen would force their way in, sir," said Mrs. Dexter, flinging open the door to admit what none but a lodging-house-keeper could, by the most elastic stretch of politeness, have denominated gentlemen, and then lingering, with true feminine curiosity, to see what occasioned their persevering pertinacity.

"Captain Seymour, I presume?" inquired the least repulsive of the twain, taking courage to speak first from the respectability attached to a full suit of extremely rusty black—"that is, you call yourself Captain Seymour. Ahem!"

"Sir!" cried Frank, in an annihilating tone.

"My name is Quibble, sir-Quibble, at your service. In the law, sir, in the law."

"Derived, no doubt, sir, from the forensic integrity of your progenitors, as all patronymics originated from personal merit, I believe. However, we will not quibble about a name! Allow me rather to ask to what fortunate circumstance I owe the unexpected honour of this visit from yourself and amiable friend, Mr. Quibble? For I cannot recal either of you to my recollection."

"Very possibly not. You slept last night at the Queen's Head Hotel, Worcester, Captain Seymour?"

"I did.

"And you left by the Rapid for Malvern, this morning, after paying

"Exactly so; but what the devil does this cross-firing mean?"

"Now, then, to the point; you confess that you did pay your bill?"
"I'll take my oath of it! It's not likely that I should forget such a novelty; the rascally Boniface has not surely sent for it again?"

"No, sir, no; you tendered in payment thereof a ten-pound note."

"Did I, by Jove! and forgot the change."

"Sir-Captain Seymour, this is a serious affair; you stand in an awful

predicament; that note was a forgery."
"By the gods of my fathers!" cried Frank, seizing Quibble by the collar, "I'll strangle the man who dares to charge me with such a crime!"

"Oh lauk! oh lauk!" exclaimed Mrs. Dexter, "there'll be murder committed in this very room! Why don't you interfere, young man!"

she continued, addressing the silent gentleman.

"No, Snoggles, no," gasped Quibble, "let him only do it, and then he can be tried for attempt at murder-for resisting the law-for contempt of court; which, altogether, will make a splendid case. Where are the handcuffs?"

"Hark!" cried Mrs. Dexter-" hark how some one is knocking at the front door! This hell upon earth will drive my first-floor lodgers away, I am positive! My gracious! who's this?" she continued, as a stout gentleman now entered the room, who, while drying the perspiration off his forehead, exclaimed, breathlessly,

"Mr. Quibble, I hope you have not attempted any violence to the captain? you are so precipitate; he is not our man; I've got the rascal in custody. Beg your pardon, sir, for the mistake; shall be glad to

offer any reasonable compensation."

"Oh, if it is only a mistake," replied Frank, "and these gentlemen

are willing to apologise too-

"Why, as to the matter of that," rejoined the gentleman who had not before spoken, "Mr. Quibble may do as he pleases; but I have no occasion to apologise; my affair with the captain is no mistake; only met the lawyer accidentally on the top of the coach, and finding that we were after the same game, we consented to hunt in couples."

"Why, who are you?" exclaimed Frank, "and what do you want?" "Why, I'm Snoggles, and I want this bill, which became due the day

you absconded."

"Then he is a swindler!" cried Mrs. Dexter; "who will pay me?" "That bill due already!" said Frank; "why, I thought it had a month

to run yet, at least."

"Why didn't you wait for it then?"

"Why, Snoggles, because I came here to get the money to take it

up," answered Frank.

"Oh! in that case it's all right! It's seldom that these sort of articles are paid so soon after they are due! Where is the money, captain?

Hand it over, for I have another job or two of the same kind for tomorrow, in London."

"Oh! I have not the money exactly."

"There's a pretty go! I thought as much! Purse or person, no

choice with us! So come-

"Stop, Mr. Snoggles," said the landlord of the Queen's Head Hotel, Worcester-"stop! Captain Seymour, like a gentleman, overlooked the gross outrage which I offered to his honour; and, without reservation, I then will take up that bill for him."

"My dear sir," cried Frank, "this generosity-

"I am convinced that you will pay me again-I am convinced of it, Captain Seymour; and, on the strength of the conviction, I shall be happy to take your note of hand for any amount."

"Mr. Quibble," said Snoggles, aside to the lawyer, "do you see any green in my eye?"

"If, sir," replied Frank, "such is your real opinion of me, and you are inclined to assist me in a complication of small difficulties—or rather out of them-I will candidly own that your kindness would be most opportune. My father is rich; I am his eldest son; but he is a screw, or, I am reckless; however, will you stand in the gap for fifty pounds for one month? These gentlemen can bear witness to the loan, and you could not have more acute ones, I fancy."

"With pleasure, Captain Seymour; and I am sure this confidence in the integrity of my fellow-creatures will give these gentlemen rather a more exalted idea of human nature than they have been in the habit of

indulging in."

"Why, as to human natur," remarked Snoggles, meditatively, "if you was acquainted with the human natur as I am intimate with, you would not crack very much about it! You yourself is the best human natur I ever seed in a publican!"

"Do not be personal, I beg, Mr. Snoggles," said Frank.

"I mean no offence, captain; but time is precious, so just discharge

this bill, and let me be moving."

The bill was discharged, and so was Mr. Snoggles, and with a gratuity, notwithstanding his impertinence. Quibble drew up another bill for the landlord, duly endorsed by him and Frank, for fifty pounds, inclusive of the twenty on the bill which had just been liquidated, and, after this amicable transaction, and sundry glasses of brandy-and-water, which the landlord mixed as if at home, he and Quibble started for Worcester, leaving Frank in a most pleasing state of mystification as to whether he was drunk, or the landlord of the Queen's Head Hotel was drunk, or whether the whole was not a vision. But no-but no-there on the table lay the money; he saw it as plainly as he saw the brandybottle; there was no mistake; and however unaccountable it did all seem, Frank could feel, and did feel, three as nice clean ten-pound Bank of England notes as ever bore the indelible mark of the celebrated Abraham Newland.

FLORENCE HAMILTON.

By Miss Julia Addison,

AUTHOR OF "THE CURATE OF WILDMERE."

CHAPTER LIII.

How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue. Shelly.

"AND now, my dear Charles," said Lord Elton, when he had listened with great interest to his son's account of his expedition, "I must tell you what I have been doing in your absence. My solicitor wrote, as we agreed he should, to the farmer in Yorkshire, requesting him to allow us to see the letters of my old housekeeper, of which you showed me the copies, as they might be useful evidence to the family his relative had served so long and so faithfully. The farmer replied, that he should have been most willing to comply with my request, but that the letters were not now in his possession; a person who looked like a lawyer's clerk having come to his house about two months ago, and asked for them on the same plea that we did. The man did not give his name, or that of his employers, but the farmer soon after his departure picked up a card, which he enclosed to me, bearing the address, 'Fox and Sharpe, solicitors, - street.' My solicitor says that this firm is notorious for its dishonourable dealings; and he has also found out that it has long been employed by Danvers. That he has obtained possession of these letters there can be no doubt, but how he should have discovered the farmer I cannot imagine."

"I know how it is," said Percival. "I have just remembered, that he asked me the address, on pretence that there was a sum of money lying in the county bank in the name of Mrs. Howard, which he would pay to her nephew. I suppose there is no recovering the letters thus

artfully obtained?"

"I should think not," replied his father. "But it is the hour appointed by Mr. Bentley, my legal adviser, for our calling upon him, and I fear you are scarcely rested from the fatigue of your journey."

Percival assured him that he was not in the least tired, and they pro-

ceeded to the counsel's chambers.

"The first and most important thing to be done," said that gentleman, after some preliminary conversation, "is to prove that the letters pretending to be written by Lady Elton are forgeries."

"I fear that will be extremely difficult to do," observed Lord Elton;

"almost impossible, especially after the lapse of so many years."

Mr. Bentley reflected for some moments, and then replied, "Difficult, certainly, but I think not impossible. In what manner did Mr. Danvers

tell you the letters came into his hands?"

"Through a favourite servant of Lady Arabella Clayton's, to whom she left her wardrobe, books, and papers; among which latter, as he said, were these letters. The servant, he told me, on perceiving their purport, thought it right to inform our family of their existence, and fearing to

show the letters to me, brought them to Danvers, to make what use of them he thought proper."

"Have you any written statement to this effect?" demanded the

lawver.

"Yes," answered Lord Elton, "I have, and in Danvers' own hand-

"That is well;" said Mr. Bentley. "Do you remember whether he

mentions the servant's name?"

"He does," replied Lord Elton; "it is Sarah Jameson. I knew the woman well; for she lived many years with Lady Arabella, who, being a great invalid, frequently employed her maid to read or write for her; and this woman has many times attended her mistress in her carriage when she called on my wife."

"Was Lady Elton on such terms of intimacy with Lady Arabella as would make it by no means improbable that she should write to her con-

fidentially?" asked the lawyer.

"She was, and I am aware that they frequently wrote to each other. Lady Arabella was the most intimate friend my wife had."

"Do you know whether Sarah Jameson is living?"

"I do not. She went to France immediately on the death of her mistress."

"She must be found;" said Mr. Bentley. "Lady Arabella, you say, resided for the last ten years of her life in the village of E—, near Bath. Some person in the village would probably be able to give some clue to her old servant's present place of abode."

"You have no reason to think that the woman would wish to injure

Lady Elton?"

"Quite the contrary," was the reply. "Lady Arabella always spoke of Jameson in the highest terms; and my wife, with whom she lived for some years before entering Lady Clayton's service, had a sincere regard for her. I believe, indeed, that had she been aware her name was falsely used against my wife, she would have come forward to disavow it."

"Would not an advertisement be the readiest way of finding her?"

asked Percival.

"We must not advertise," said the counsel; "because if Mr. Danvers saw such an advertisement, his suspicions might be excited; and it is desirable to keep him entirely in the dark as to our proceedings at present."

"Yes," said Lord Elton, "and as my son and I have retained our noms de guerre, and I have avoided showing myself anywhere where it was likely I should be recognised, I hope he will not learn that we are in

England until all our preparations are completed."

"Might we not," said Percival, "by means of the farmer, Howard, identify the man who carried away his aunt's letters, and obtain circumstantial proof that this dishonourable action was instigated by Danvers?"

"There can be no harm in doing so," replied Mr. Bentley, "or, at least, in endeavouring to do so; but Mr. Norman, Lord Elton's solicitor, tells me that Messrs. Fox and Sharpe think nothing of perjury; and the clerk would probably swear he had never seen the Yorkshireman before."

Percival said that he would undertake this part of the business, and

accordingly wrote to Howard requesting him to come immediately to London.

On being asked whether he thought he should know the clerk again, the farmer replied that it was impossible he could mistake him, for that

he squinted, and had a club foot.

Percival took Howard with him to the office of Messrs. Fox and Sharpe, and on being shown into the presence of the first-mentioned gentleman, inquired whether he had a clerk in his employ possessing those personal deformities. Mr. Fox replied that he had; and Percival requested to see him. Somewhat surprised, Mr. Fox desired that Mr. Lambton should be summoned. On his appearing, Percival asked the farmer whether this was the person who had taken the letters concerning the Elton family into his keeping. The farmer unhesitatingly replied that it was; and Percival then observing that he was related to that family, begged to know where the letters now were.

Before the clerk could answer, Mr. Fox interposed:

"Sir," he said, "allow me to observe that I have not the remotest idea what you allude to. I know nothing of any letters relating to the Elton family, and therefore how should my clerk? Did you ever see this man before, Mr. Lambton?" he asked, pointing to the farmer.

"Never, sir," replied the clerk, boldly.

"And have you any idea what papers this gentleman alludes to?"

"Not any, sir," answered the clerk.

"I thought not. So you see, sir, that there is a mistake somewhere."

"The mistake is on your side," said Percival, "as I will prove to you. Is not this one of your cards?"

Mr. Fox examined the card handed to him, and then replied, but with some diminution of confidence in his manner,

"Certainly, sir; and what then?"

"It was found," pursued Percival, by Mr. Howard, immediately after the departure of your clerk; and it was by this means that we traced him out."

"Ay, sir," said the Yorkshireman, "I am perfectly ready to swear to it, and to that man there, and to his carrying away the letters; and so is my wife, and my neighbour Blackmore, and my two sons, for they all saw him; so it's no use pretending to look so simple and innocent, Mr. Lambton, if that's your name, for there are not so many like you that

you are likely to be forgotten.'

"My good man," said Mr. Fox, angrily, "you had better be silent. Now I reflect," he added, turning to Percival, "I think I have some faint recollection of sending into Yorkshire, by the desire of Mr. Danvers, about some old letters or papers, which he thought might be interesting to the family, and it is very possible I might have employed Mr. Lambton, although, like myself, he very naturally, in the multiplicity of business, forgot the circumstance. Consider, Lambton; do you think you had anything to do with the affair?"

After some moments' reflection, Mr. Lambton began to think that he had some vague recollection of going somewhere about a packet of letters; he was not at all sure, but he thought it not improbable; and he then echoed Mr. Fox's remark about the multiplicity of business causing

him to forget the circumstance.

"You have a great deal of business, I dare say," observed the farmer, laughing; "but there's not so much of it lies in Yorkshire, I should imagine, but what you might keep the journeys you take there distinct in your memory, especially when it's to hunt up private letters, which is not regular law business."

"And now that we have brought these facts to your recollection, Mr. Fox," said Percival, "perhaps you will oblige me by answering my first

question-where are the letters now?"

Mr. Fox deliberated a little, and then replied, "I think, if I remember right, that finding they were of no use or interest, we, by Mr. Danvers' desire, destroyed them."

Having obtained the proofs he desired, Percival, without further com-

ment, withdrew.

In the mean time, Lord Elton, with the lawyer's assistance, had succeeded in tracing out Sarah Jameson. At the village where her mistress had lived, the innkeeper's wife, formerly her fellow-servant, although she had long lost sight of the woman herself, gave the address of a nephew in London, who said that on the death of the lady with whom Jameson went to France, she had returned, about four years ago, to her native country, and was now living near Margate. A letter from Lord Elton speedily brought her to London, and she expressed herself perfectly ready to bear witness that she had never seen or heard of any such letters as those Danvers professed to have received from her. She said, also, that it was through Danvers she obtained her last situation, and that she had wondered what could make him interest himself about her. Now the interest was accounted for, by his anxiety to get her beyond the reach of being questioned.

CHAPTER LIV.

Now, villain, I'll unmask thee!

Old Play.

It was about a fortnight after the arrival of Lord Elton and his son in England, that they found themselves journeying towards the ancestral domain which neither had ever thought again to revisit. As the massive pile, that had been the scene of so much both of joy and misery to each, rose to view from amidst majestic woods now rich with the deep and varied hues of autumn, the hearts of both swelled with emotion, and both became silent.

On alighting at the hall door, Lord Elton desired to be instantly shown into Danvers' presence.

"What names shall I say, sir?" inquired the servant.

"It is not necessary to announce me," answered Lord Elton. "Con-

duct me to Mr. Danvers without delay."

The tone of command in which these words were spoken, and the noble bearing of the strangers, for such the servant considered them, silenced him; and with an air of respect he led the way to the dining-room.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and Danvers, robed in a gay-coloured dressing-gown of rich silk, was lolling, newspaper in hand,

in a large easy-chair, at a little distance from a table on which stood the remains of a luxurious luncheon.

On hearing the door open, he carelessly exclaimed, without taking the

trouble to look round,

"Well, Desborough, so you're come at last? I had given you up, old fellow, and was obliged to have luncheon without you. One can't wait for one's meals, you know; but you'll find some good things left, if you

are hungry, before we go to the billiard-room."

Receiving no answer to his observations, Danvers turned his head; and great was his surprise when, instead of the expected friend, he beheld Lord Elton and his companion. He grew pale, and for a moment remained immovable. Had it been Lord Elton alone, but with him, the son who, through his means, had been banished and disowned. In that one moment a thousand doubts, suspicions, fears, conjectures, flashed through his brain, but his presence of mind did not for more than one moment desert him. Starting from his seat, he hastened towards Lord Elton, who, with his son, had advanced, without speaking, to the middle of the room, and exclaimed, with well-feigned pleasure:

"My dear Elton, this is as agreeable as it is unexpected. You should, however, have sent a line to apprise me of your coming, for I might have been out, which I should have regretted extremely. But to what do we

owe the happiness of seeing you here?"

He held out his hand as he spoke, but Lord Elton did not take it, and,

with his eyes sternly fixed upon him, still remained silent.

"Ah! Captain Wentworth, I think," continued Danvers, without appearing to remark the change in Lord Elton's demeanour. "If I

mistake not we have had the pleasure of meeting before."

"This young man is not Captain Wentworth," said Lord Elton; "he is, as you are well aware, my son; whom you cruelly and wickedly estranged from me, whose mother's death you caused by the most base and infamous calumny-

"My dear Elton," interrupted Danvers, "what in the world do you mean? Are you deranged, or has some one (he glanced with a scowl at

Percival) been poisoning your mind against me?"
"Since we last parted," said Lord Elton, "I have become acquainted with your meanness, your falsehood, your deceit, your deep-laid plans for your own aggrandisement, which were carried out with reckless and fiend-like indifference to the misery of those to whom you owed everything, and with whom you were living on terms of the most intimate friendship."

"Indeed," said Danvers, endeavouring to disguise his trepidation-"indeed, I do not understand you. I wish-I mean, pray oblige me by

speaking more plainly."

"I will," answered Lord Elton. "I have witnesses to prove that the letters which you pretended had been written by my unhappy wife were forged, either by you, or at your desire; that you treacherously obtained possession of, and caused to be destroyed, other documents which you thought might assist in disclosing the truth; that you have perjured yourself repeatedly. It is vain to deny the charges, or to attempt a defence, for I repeat, I have full and circumstantial proofs, and witnesses whose evidence, with all your cunning, you would find it impossible to set aside."

He briefly recounted what these were, and then waited in silence for Danvers to speak. The guilty man stood like one stunned; he was confounded, speechless, overwhelmed. He saw that his bright prospects were for ever at an end, that his plans were defeated, that he was lost—ruined. He now began to revolve in his mind what was the best course to pursue, whether to threaten or to plead; and finally decided on throwing himself on Lord Elton's mercy.

"I—I—I plead guilty," at last he stammered; "but trust you will view my offences with a lenient eye. Consider, I had great temptations

-that circumstances favoured me."

"Temptations!" repeated Lord Elton. "Did not I, when by gaming and extravagance you had squandered away your own fortune, overlooking your errors on account of your youth, raise you again to affluence? Temptations! Had you not the means of gratifying every wish? Were

not kindness and affection lavished upon you?"

"That is all true," said Danvers; "but still, I repeat, I had great temptations. Was it not natural the thought should often enter my mind, that but for one boy I should be heir to a coronet? You cannot deny that circumstances favoured me. Your disposition to jealousy—Lady Elton's attachment to her cousin and early playfellow, Sir Frederic Clarence—his frequent visits to Elton Hall in your absence of some months—his death, which of course prevented any chance of trouble resulting from using his name, or any explanation in which he might clear Isabel's character. What could be more easy, I thought, than to persuade you that she had loved him with more than a sister's affection, that——"

"Stop!" cried Lord Elton, indignantly. "Cease to profane her name with your worthless lips. Who first sowed the seeds of jealousy in my breast? You—you, Danvers. Wretch—villain! but for you, she might have been now by my side—but for you, my son had never been driven from his home—but for you, I had not been weighed down almost to the grave by sorrow and remorse. Out of my sight, destroyer, and never—never let me see or hear of you more!"

He paused for a moment, and then continued:

"That you may not be reduced to beggary or starvation, I will settle on you a hundred a year for life, on condition of your signing, in presence of proper witnesses, a recantation of all your false statements, especially those regarding my son's legitimacy, and promising to quit England for ever."

Great as was his fall, Danvers felt relieved to be let off so much more easily than he had expected. Not the least part of his punishment was

the shame and humiliation of being thus unmasked.

"You will not," he said, endeavouring to recover in some degree his usual assurance of manner—"you will not, I hope, Elton, publish this—this affair to our friends. These strictly family matters never tell to the advantage of either party concerned. We have hitherto kept our own counsel."

Lord Elton interrupted him by a gesture of impatience, and pointed towards the door.

"Charles-Percival," said Danvers, "for the sake of relationship and past intimacy, intercede with your father. He is really too hard upon me."

"You have little right to claim my good offices, Danvers," commenced Percival, "but-"

"Do not speak to him, Charles," interrupted Lord Elton. "Once more," he continued, addressing Danvers-"once more I command you

to quit my presence and my house instantly!"

Danvers obeyed him, at least in the first respect; but he did not leave the house until he had collected everything that belonged to him, and written hasty notes to about twenty friends whom he expected to dinner that very evening, stating, "that in consequence of a coolness which had arisen between Lord Elton and himself, he had determined not to remain a single day longer at Elton Castle, and must therefore defer the pleasure of seeing them for the present."

It may be as well to relate here all that remains to be told of this base and unprincipled man. After signing the document spoken of by Lord Elton, he retired to the Continent, and meeting with some of his gay companions on their way to Paris, proceeded with them to that city, and

joined in all their dissipation and amusement.

About half a year after the scene just recounted, Percival received the following letter from him:

"DEAR CHARLES,—I find it utterly impossible to subsist on the miserable pittance allowed me by your father. I am already five or six hundred pounds in debt. For the honour of the family you surely will not leave me to starvation or a prison, one or the other of which alternatives is now staring me in the face; unless, indeed, I settle the affair by blowing my brains out, which would be more discreditable still. Hoping for an immediate reply, "I remain, yours, &c. "T. DANVERS."

Actuated more by good-nature than by "regard for the honour of the family," Percival paid his debts, but warned him that he should not again do so. About a year afterwards came another letter, dated from a French prison. Once more Percival assisted him, but solemnly declared that he

would never again minister to his extravagance.

Danvers, however, on emerging from prison, launched into fresh ex-How long this might have lasted, and how much more he might have annoyed his noble cousins by his applications, is uncertain; for not many months afterwards, when returning home from a late revel at the house of one of his friends, in a state of intoxication, he fell into the Seine and was drowned.

CONCLUSION.

While pensive poets painful vigils keep, Sleepless themselves to give their readers sleep. Pope.

He came not—ah! no, he came not; The night came on alone.

Theirs the pure, open, prosperous love,
That, pledged on earth and sealed above,
Grows in the world's approving eyes,
In friendship's smile and home's caress,
Collecting all the heart's sweet ties
Into one knot of happiness!

Lalla Rookh.

LORD ELTON and his son did not remain long at Elton Castle. It had at first been their intention to stay there some time, but Percival, perceiving how inexpressibly painful to his father were the emotions caused by the sight of these well known scenes, urged him to depart the next day.

"The object of our coming here is accomplished," he remarked; and remember, dear father, I have not yet introduced you to Florence."

Lord Elton readily assented, and they proceeded without more delay

to Seagrove Hall.

Percival had several times been there during his stay in London, and had the happiness to perceive that Florence was rapidly regaining her health and strength; the bloom had returned to her cheek, and her eyes were as bright and her smile as radiant as in former days. It was a proud and happy moment when he presented her to his father, and found that Lord Elton was even still more struck and charmed with her than he had anticipated.

"It must be your presence and society, dear Florence," said Percival to her, the third evening of their stay at Seagrove Hall, "for I have not seen my father look so well, or appear in such good spirits, since we

met."

"I had no idea," said Florence, "that I should like and admire him as much as I do; although, from what you told me, I expected to like

him very much indeed."

Both Florence and Percival were amused and pleased to observe the friendship which had sprung up between the grave and melancholy Lord Elton and the little playful, lively Adela. She would talk to him, or sit by his side, and strive to entertain him, with a thoughtful kindness above her years; while he appeared to take a strong and unusual interest in the sweet and beautiful child.

During this period nothing had been heard of Sir Robert Craven, and it was supposed that, with his bride, he was making a short wedding tour. The only tidings his aunt had received of his intended marriage was through Miss Trimmer's letter to Lady Seagrove. She was overcome with anger and disappointment on hearing the intelligence; and now to these feelings was added anxiety, because her nephew neither appeared nor wrote to her. About a week afterwards, however, she received a short note, stating that he was in Scotland, where he intended

remaining some months. He desired her to write immediately, and tell him whether the reports he had heard concerning "that fellow Wentworth" were true, and whether he was going to marry Florence.

"He does not say one word about his own marriage," said Miss Craven to Lady Seagrove, in a tone of complaint. "Is it not sly of

him?"

"Sly, indeed!" said her ladyship; "and that little, ungrateful, artful, deceitful thing, his wife. It will be no use her sending cards to me, for

I am resolved I will not call on her."

After their visit at Lady Seagrove's, Percival and his father were some time in London, for the convenience of arranging various matters of business connected with the marriage of the former; not as before, at an hotel, but at Lord Elton's house in Park-lane. It being the month of October, London was of course deserted; but a few old friends, whom chance called to the metropolis, or who resided near it, came to offer their good wishes and congratulations, and to express their joy at seeing Lord Elton again among them under such happy circumstances.

Among the visitors was Mr. Silverdale.

"I could not resist coming to wish you joy," said that gentleman to Percival, "and expressing the pleasure it gives me to hear that

> Kind Fate has smiled benignant on your lot, And Fortune claimed you as her favourite child."

"Thank you," replied Percival. "I am always glad to see old friends. And how have you been since I last had the pleasure of seeing you? Is your muse as flourishing as ever?"

The poet shook his head. "The muse has of late been somewhat

neglected," he replied.

"Ah, Captain Wentworth-I mean Lord Percival-strange changes happen to us. I am a married man!"

Indeed! I congratulate you," said his companion. "The fact is," pursued the poet, "that I loved her."
"Lady Louisa Tufton?" said Percival.

"No," replied Silverdale; "Florence-Florence Hamilton."

Percival looked a good deal surprised.

"Yes," continued the poet, "although I am married to another, I never loved but her."

Percival did not know what to say in answer to this confession; so,

after a short pause, he inquired if his visitor had taken luncheon.

But Silverdale, without heeding this query, continued: "I have ceased to love her, finding that my love was hopeless, and feel a daily increasing regard and attachment to my wife, Lady Louisa, who has latterly been less exacting and disposed to find fault with me for not being sufficiently devoted, which were her only faults, and has also shown herself capable of much feeling. She has most kindly insisted on having my best works published at her own expense, and will continue to do so; so that I shall no longer have to dread the frown of those awful people to poets and authors-I mean publishers. And I am able," he continued, taking six or seven handsomely bound duodecimo volumes, and one of larger size, from his pockets, "to present you with a copy of my principal poetical works, and also"—here he took up the larger volume—"of

2 T 2

my tragedy, 'Trombonius,' which you remember I offered to let you see in manuscript. And pray be sure to give me your candid opinion as soon

as you have read it."

Percival thanked him for the present, mentally remarking, as many probably have remarked before him, that, among the minor miseries of life, there are few greater than the being asked by literary friends of small talent, but great pretensions, to read their works and give your candid opinion of them; feeling sure that you will be strictly cross-examined by the author on the subject, and that if he finds out, which he will be sure to do, that you have only dipped into his works, he will look coolly upon you for ever afterwards. However, in justice to Percival's heroic resolution and powers of endurance, it should be recorded that, in the course of a year, he actually read a volume and a half of the poems, and the first and last scenes of the tragedy.

Two months had elapsed, and the day for the marriage of Percival and Florence was fixed, as also that of Gertrude and Pemberton, which was to take place at the same time. A large party were assembled at Seagrove Hall, including Mr. Harley and his sister, the former having yielded to the entreaties of his friends that he would emerge from his retreat to witness the marriages of the young people in whom he was so much interested; Gertrude, who was passing a few days with Florence; Lord Elton and Percival, who were also staying in the house; and Pemberton, who was dining there, as was also Miss Craven, and several other guests.

Dinner was over, and the whole party were again assembled in the drawing-room. Florence had just been singing, when the attention of every one was attracted by a commotion in the hall, and the loud tones of a somewhat highly-pitched female voice, seemingly half angry, half distressed. An instant afterwards the door was burst open, and a person in a very much disordered travelling dress, her bonnet half off, and her hair dishevelled, ran into the room, and having advanced to the centre, stopped suddenly, with the air of one who is surprised to find herself in the midst of a large company. For a moment she stood with a bewildered air, as if uncertain whether to retire or remain, when a faint scream from Lady Seagrove, who was engaged in conversation with Lord Elton, drew her attention to that lady.

"Wilhelmina!" exclaimed Lady Seagrove, with extreme displeasure in her voice and manner. "How can you venture into my presence, after what has happened. My servants had orders not to admit you. You

must be aware-"

"My beloved friend and patroness!" exclaimed the intruder, in a tremulous and agitated voice, "grant me, I entreat you, the favour of five minutes' private interview."

"Florence," said Lady Seagrove. "Mr. Pemberton," she continued,

"ask Florence to come and speak to me."

Pemberton, who was standing near, much amused by the scene, did as he was desired, and quickly brought Florence to Lady Seagrove's side.

Whilst his hostess spoke to Florence in a low voice, Pemberton took the opportunity of accosting the newly-arrived lady. So great was the excitement or agitation she was labouring under, that she scarcely heeded his polite salutation; but when, addressing her as Lady Craven, he begged to offer his congratulations on the late happy event,

and inquired where Sir Robert was, she gave a sudden and hasty start, and said, while the colour mounted to her temples,

"Hush, hush, Mr. Pemberton; for mercy's sake do not call me so. I am not Lady Craven. It is all a mistake. The fact is, that I—I—

changed my mind."

Some feeling or recollection seemed to press with overpowering force on the mind of the speaker, for after a short struggle she burst into a violent flood of tears, this time tears called forth by genuine feelings—

those of mortification and humbled pride.

Lady Seagrove, in the mean time, had been consulting Florence as to what she had better say or do. Great as was Florence's aversion to Miss Trimmer, she thought that it would perhaps be harsh not to hear what she wanted to say, although of opinion that she ought not to have a private interview with Lady Seagrove, as there was no knowing how she might impose or work upon her former patroness's mind. She therefore suggested that it would be well for Lady Seagrove to depute her (Florence) to hear Miss Trimmer in her place; to which proposal Lady Seagrove, who had latterly appeared bent on making Florence amends for former unkindness, by complying with her wishes in every respect, most willingly consented. Indeed, her eyes were now in so great a measure opened to her former favourite's character, that she disliked the idea of an interview with Miss Trimmer scarcely less than Florence disliked it for her. Turning, therefore, to the weeping lady, on whom the eyes of the whole room were fixed in surprise and wonder, she said, in a firm and grave manner:

"I cannot speak to you now, myself, but if you will go into another

room, Florence will follow you."

The crestfallen flatterer not choosing to expose herself still more, by contesting this point in public, beat an immediate retreat. When alone with Florence she gave full way to her feelings, sobbing and weeping violently, stamping her foot upon the floor, wringing her hands, and exclaiming that she was ill-used, forsaken, betrayed; that, added to all her sufferings and misfortunes, when she came back to the place which had long been her home, she found that her best, her only friend set against her.

Florence allowed the storm to rage for a few minutes without making any attempt to check it, and then gravely asked what she wished to say.

"I want to speak to Lady Seagrove, and not to you," cried the distressed lady, vehemently. "I won't speak to you, and nothing shall make me. It is you who have set her against me; I know it is. It is you who have been speaking ill of me to her, and abusing me behind my back."

"I never spoke ill of you," said Florence, "either to Lady Seagrove

or any one else."

"Then go and persuade her to come and speak to me directly."

"I cannot do that," returned Florence. "You heard what she said.

I will tell her anything you wish her to be told."

"Then tell her that I have been most cruelly, most abominably deceived by her nephew; that he persuaded me to elope with him, and that when on the day appointed, I went, trembling and agitated to meet him at the place agreed on, instead of finding him there with a carriage

ready to convey us to London, where we were to be married, I found no one. Thinking he might have been delayed by some unavoidable contretems, I waited, not doubting that he would soon appear. For three full hours I walked up and down, with my band-box in my hand, in a state of mind too agonising for description. But still he came not, and it began to grow dark, so I could not wait any longer. But what was I to do? I could not go back to Lady Dorcas Woollersby's after having written her a letter explaining why I went, and signed myself Wilhelmina Craven."

The speaker here became so overpowered with the recollection of her wrongs, and feelings of mixed rage, shame, sorrow, and disappointment, that she paused, and gave way to a burst of weeping. Recovering

herself in a few moments, she proceeded:

"I passed that night at a little inn at L—, and there wrote a letter to Sir Robert. I waited two days for his answer, but none came. I then set out, myself, for his house, wrapped in a large cloak, that I might not be recognised, and arriving just at dusk desired his servants to say that a person wished to speak to him. Judge of my dismay when I was told that he was gone to Scotland for some months, and had not left his address! I saw there was no hope," sobbed Miss Trimmer; "that I was jilted—fairly jilted; and that in such a way, too; when I had myself made the affair public. But I've not done with him yet. I'll proceed against him for breach of promise of marriage, and we'll see who has the best of it then!"

There was a silence, and then the injured lady exclaimed:

"Have you nothing to say to this, Florence? Have I not been most shamefully treated?"

"You have, without doubt," replied Florence; "and I am sorry for

you, but-"

"But what?" said Miss Trimmer, sharply, observing that she paused.

"I was going to say," observed Florence, gently, "that you knew from his previous conduct that Sir Robert was a man wholly devoid of prin-

ciple and honour, and therefore-

"What has that to do with it?" cried Miss Trimmer, interrupting her, angrily. "I did not ask you for a moral lecture, Miss Hamilton. What I want is, that you should repeat to Lady Seagrove, since you will not allow me to speak to her myself, the history of my wrongs, and say that I am returned to her, anxious to resume the position I formerly held, that I am truly penitent if I have in any way offended her, and that I am willing to promise never to leave her again."

"I will tell her what you say," said Florence; "and now I must for the present leave you, as Lady Seagrove particularly desired me not to

be absent long."

"Very well," sullenly returned Miss Trimmer, who, it is worthy of remark, never lisped once during the whole of this interview; "and I will go to bed. You may also tell Lady Seagrove, that during the last two months which I passed with some of my relatives at Bath, I never ceased to think of her."

When all the visitors had dispersed except the party in the house, and Pemberton, who remained by Lady Seagrove's request, she desired Florence to relate all that Miss Trimmer had told her. Florence did so,

and when she concluded, Lady Seagrove said:

"I am firmly resolved never to have her back again as a companion. Since she went, it is incredible how many instances of her misrepresentation, deceit, and artifice, have come to light. There is no knowing how much harm such a person may do. The falsehoods she told you about Florence," continued Lady Seagrove, addressing Percival, "on your quitting Seagrove Hall, after the first visit you paid us, would alone be sufficient to make me discard her for ever."

"I do not mean to excuse Sir Robert," remarked Pemberton; "but I cannot help thinking she was rightly served. As you observe, Lady Seagrove, it is impossible to say what mischief may not be done by a person who does not scruple to utter any falsehood to serve her own interests. How extremely diverting it must have been to see her walking up and down, band-box in hand, waiting for her faithless swain!"

"I will not speak to her," said Lady Seagrove, "but write; telling her my sentiments, and hinting at a few of the discoveries I have

made."

"Do you know," asked Pemberton, "who her relations are? I suppose though, of course, having been a protégée of yours, she is of good family?"

"She is related to the Wiltshire Trimmers," replied Lady Seagrove;

"and has no very near relations."

"The Wiltshire Trimmers are unexceptionable," said Pemberton; but it is rather curious that, when I was a month at Bath last year, I

frequently heard the name of Trimmer."

"Do you not think it probable," suggested Lord Elton, "that this lady, who deviated from the truth in so many instances, might do so with respect to her relations?"

"I will investigate," said Pemberton; "it is a coincidence her having

relations at Bath."

The next morning Miss Trimmer received a letter from her former patroness, which not all her assurance could make her construe into anything but a final dismissal, which it was hopeless to make any effort to resist.

That very day saw the mortified and humbled favourite sent away in disgrace to the house of her father, who, as Pemberton found on investi-

gation through some friends at Bath, was—a shoemaker!

Lady Seagrove never had another companion; indeed, she seemed to have conceived quite a horror of the class. So great was her displeasure against her brother, Admiral Harding, for the harshness he had shown Florence, and the contemptible trick in which he had compelled her to play the principal part, that she never again felt or behaved towards him as formerly, nor did he ever revisit Seagrove Hall.

Miss Craven, when she found that her nephew had not married Miss Trimmer, congratulated herself extremely on his happy escape; but she had small cause for rejoicing, for about a year afterwards her "dear Robert" put an end to all her brilliant matrimonial schemes for him, by

marrying an actress of notoriously disreputable character.

Miss Trimmer fulfilled her threat of bringing an action against him for breach of promise of marriage, and after a most annoying and expen-

sive lawsuit, the baronet found himself obliged to pay very heavy

damages.

That young lady, however, never succeeded in raising herself above her own sphere, and marrying some one in a higher station of life, but after wasting her youth in vain endeavours, was at last glad to accept the hand of an antique upholsterer of her native city.

Seldom had a happier and more light-hearted party assembled to keep Christmas together than that which met at Elton Castle on the anniversary of that festive season following the marriage of Florence and

Percival, which took place in the previous October.

Pemberton was then more lively and in higher spirits than ever with his lovely young bride, whose warm friendship for Florence lasted, as did that of himself and Percival, through life. Mr. Harley and his sister, the former of whom entered into all the merriment going on around him with as much spirit as the youngest of the group, with Adela and Lady Seagrove, whose nerves had grown much stronger, and temper much more even since Miss Trimmer's departure, completed the party.

Little more remains to be told of those to whom the events recorded

in these pages relate.

Lord Elton, although his former fits of deep melancholy would still at times come over him, and the remembrance of her who was no more would still return to wring his heart with sorrow and remorse, enjoyed a greater share of tranquillity and happiness than he had expected would ever again be his in this world. The thought of her last words, as repeated to him by his son, was a never-failing source of consolation, as was also the love of that son and Florence.

The young Adela, who divided her time between her sister and Lady Seagrove, continued daily to entwine herself more closely round his affections, nor was he less fond of her when two lovely children were added to the group; a boy, the image of his beautiful mother, and a girl, in whom

his lost Isabel seemed to live again.

Percival and Florence found that every day, instead of lessening, increased and deepened their love for each other; and though time brought them—as to whom does it not?—some portion of the world's trials and sorrow, to cast a passing cloud over their happiness, they felt that there is no grief which such affection as theirs cannot rob of half its bitterness, as there is no joy to which it does not impart a tenfold value.

A SUMMER EVENING'S THOUGHTS IN METRE.

By G. W. THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF "BALLADS OF THE NEW WORLD," &C.

THE MILL STREAM.

ROUND goes the mill wheel, Ponderous, slow; Fast through the black arch The dark waters flow.

Under the grey bridge The sunbeams are glancing; Onward the glad stream Is leaping and dancing.

Down with the tide-down The swift trout are plying, Fast as the fleet birds Over them flying.

Now from the dark wheel Drip, drips the water; Sweet sounds to the miller And his fair daughter.

Sweet is the music Of the mill's creaking, When of full coffer It is still speaking.

THE SUITOR. All the summer long I woo'd thee-Woo'd thee without guile, Yet, in spite of all my sighing, Never won a smile.

I told thee that thy cheek was fair As the rose-leaf soft; In thy little ear I whispered, Who may tell how oft.

'Neath the linden-tree in blossom Clasped thee to my breast, And thy heart's loud throbbing music Did I hush to rest.

RUNIC RHYMES, A.D. 904.

I, Thorkel's greatest Jarl, know well Many a Runic rhyme and spell; Neither Œsir dwarf nor man, Though from Odin's loins sprang, Know so well the spell and charm That can guard from grief or harm.

"No sleeping wolf gains spoil or prey." I have words the blood to stay; Though sharp axe hath bitten in, I can join the bone and skin.

"Age is like a flint-head dart,
That can reach the stoutest heart."
I have spells by sea and land
That can blunt the sharpest brand.

"Trust not to the sleeping snake."
I have charms all chains to break.
When my incantation ceases
Then the fetters drop to pieces.

"He that trusts in one night's frost
At a ford will soon be lost."
I have spells to lull to rest
Hatred in a foeman's breast.

"Praise a sword, but prove it first, Silent foe is far the worst."

I have rhymes you well might praise, That the fiercest storm allays.

"Trust not in a broken sword; Sit not at a foeman's board." I can call from withered tree The dead men to dance with me.

"Praise a maiden when she's wed,
The ice when you have o'er it sped."
I can stay by magic spell
Sorcerers on their way to hell;
And all woes they wish to men
Frustrate in a moment then.

ASPIRATION.

I've seen the white moon striving
Her way through dusk-clouds driving,
When the floating wrack,
Flew fast and black,
And the wind the cloud was riving.

I've seen the glad lark flying,
High o'er the pale light dying;
And in spite of shower,
And storms that lower,

Up to blue heaven hieing.

I've seen the green blade springing,

I've heard the glad bird singing,
And his pathway,
At break of day,
Up through the red clouds winging.

I've seen the free stream rushing
From out the dark wood gushing
O'er rock and stone,
With a silvery moan,

And then in the torrent crushing.

QUEER PEOPLE.

BY JOHN ALLEN.

IV.

AMBITIOUS PEOPLE.

Ambition being as common as grass, often proves itself to be every whit as green, and, like that humble herb, not seldom shows itself in quarters where it is least expected, and where it looks very much not at home, and wretchedly out of place. Of so universal a character is this "glorious fault," that everybody seems to possess a share of it: maybe large, or maybe small, yet a share nevertheless, and into the company of some of the small shareholders the present paper is intended to bring the reader, who, we will take for granted, is in the enjoyment of a magnificent amount.

These individuals, then, are strewn over this island most lavishly. In every town, in every street—we had almost said in every house. At public dinners, bothering reporters, in certain columns of the newspapers, troubling the readers, at balls looking large, at evening parties making night hideous (if evening and night may be thus unceremoniously brought into collision), anywhere or everywhere you need not look in vain for them: their ambition showing itself in an inordinate desire to be always showing off, and bringing themselves into notice, or in convulsive struggles to shine in society, for which neither birth nor talent has qualified them.

We mentioned evening parties where you may find these people in shoals; here you are sure to meet with them; from miss in her teens to the man of sixty here are people ambitious in their manifold several ways. Some affecting an incessant display of wit, and, as a natural consequence, being insufferably dull, telling stories without end, and what is worse, without point, with their subject-matter making folks sleepy, yet with their noise most cruelly preventing them from sleeping. Others again there are dotingly fond of singing, but who ever, with a wretched coquetry, persist in declaring-unconscious of the truth they utter-that they cannot sing, and who, finally having been prevailed upon to try, never know when to give over, who take a mighty deal of lifting up and as much pulling down, thirsting for applause, forced or spontaneous, having very high notions of their own ability, yet wishing to appear unconscious of its existence; and these are ambitious muffs. Those who delight in dancing are an ambitious race, and often care for nothing else, going through their evolutions as though the eyes of Europe were upon them, scorning conversation and everything besides the dance with a lofty scorn, and doing all in their power to verify Hook's biting declaration-"The greater the fool the better the dancer." There are also those whose dress is their ambition, and in which all other things are merged, whose only desire is to be better attired than anybody else. Conversation, card-playing, flirtation; at these parties everything has its ambitious votaries, all considering themselves for the time being the

greatest of the great, and going home impressed with the idea that they

have been shining brilliantly.

Our friends the Chawleys, now, are deserving of notice in this chapter as a family fired, or rather that were once fired, by this wondrous thing—ambition; theirs being no less remarkable for its magnitude than for the suddenness with which it appeared and expired. In a day their Rome was built, in another laid in ruins. Theirs was the feverish desire, the insane attempt to force themselves into society above them, to sink a shop and float a palace, to quit a molehill that did suit them, and ascend a mountain that did not.

Mr. Chawley, a man of fifty-five or so, had, from his youth upward, pursued the useful occupation of a grocer, and having grown weary of business, and being under no necessity of following it, determined to retire upon his savings, and be henceforth-a gentleman. Old acquaintances were discarded, old haunts no longer frequented, the lower orders vanished incontinently from his sympathies, and his heart became wholly set upon winning the friendship of the fashionable. Leaving the town where so much of his life had been spent, he would repair to some place in favour with the beau monde, where, his former employment being unknown, he trusted he might be able to pick up such a general acquaintance as he longed for. He might find it difficult to divest himself of his plebeian bearing and assume that of the patrician; but like many more, he trusted to his money to cover his faults, and though his etiquette might not be the most spotless, or his grammar the best, by a judicious display of his wealth he thought to throw dust in the eyes of the lookers-on, and thus to make the counterfeit gentleman pass for gold. For though not an Adonis, he was rich as—as—yes, Rothschild; and the reason why we use the name of Rothschild instead of that of Crossus is, that authors have so very often borrowed from the latter to illustrate wealth, that we think it about time the poor fellow was declared bankrupt.

And Mrs. Chawley was the worthy wife of a worthy husband. To her as to him business had become a bore, and gentility the only thing worth living for. In her opinion, it was time that the family began to look up in the world; time that the gig was superseded by a carriage, and the signboard by a crest. She resolved to associate for the future with none but gentlefolk, and, of course, to be very careful whom she spoke to. For it is a fact that your propped-up gentry cannot afford to stoop; they know their own weakness, and, like a sore-backed race, dare not bend for fear of feeling and making obvious their infirmity. And Mrs.

Chawley was the archetype of her daughter.

Even Master Chawley, though very young at the time, was obliged to fall in with the views of his parents, was taught to hold up his infantile head, and to sever himself for ever from the dirty juveniles who had hitherto been his bosom friends; the very toys of the tradesman's child, we may be sure, were consigned to oblivion, to make way for the playthings of the gentleman's son; and we know that the ancient rockinghorse was broken up, being supplanted by a rampant-locking animal in comparison, decidedly thorough-bred and as unequivocably blood as wood and paint could make it; for it was Mr. Chawley's principal wish that, as he said, his heir should be throughout his life "a gentleman aristocrat;" that he should hold himself above a profession, and never

dream of trade. The father himself had mounted the ladder of gentility somewhat late in the day, but he had resolved to have one in the family

from beginning to end a gentleman.

Well, this worthy family repaired to the fashionable town, started their carriage, displayed their wealth, and threw out all other baits they could to attract gold-fish. The sport, at first, was only indifferent, but two or three of these fishes at length were caught, and then more followed, till the Chawleys saw their piscatory endeavours crowned with all the success they had ever dared to hope for. They gave parties to which they invited their high friends, who accepted the invitations; they paid and received morning visits, of course were sycophantic, and for a short time all went on well. But a change soon took place. Visits speedily became fewer, parties more thinly attended, some of these new friends ceased to recognise, others satirised, and all voted the family low, slow, and vulgar. And—we write it exultingly—the family in their turn began, like sensible people, to find that they had been moving out of their sphere. Mrs. Chawley learned to think her old friend Mrs. Box, whom she had so recently snubbed, not at all a despisable companion. Mr. Chawley imbibed the salubrious notion that there would be no great sacrifice of dignity in allowing his son to follow some profession. younger lady again turned her thoughts towards Mr. Tibbs-a lover whom, in her days of aspiration, she had rejected, and whom we ought to have previously mentioned—while her amiable little brother once more sorrowed after his old companions of the gutter, and grieved for his old and ill-used rocking-horse. This failure, however, the Chawleys have never forgotten, or entirely overcome. They have left the fashionable town, and returned to their old place, where they have taken a little suburban villa, but are in the constant habit of knowingly shaking their heads and telling of what they once were; excepting Mr. Chawley, who vows gentility to be all gammon and something the other side of dreadful. He has ceased to wear broad-cloth, doffed his black kids, and when we saw him a short time ago, he wore a beard of two days' growth, and was particularly dirty in those parts of his person where young Mr. Cobbett ought to have had the conjugation of the verb avoir, namely, at his fingers' ends. He has run from one extreme to another, and we are sorry for him. But people who will go up in balloons must blame their own folly for doing so if the vessels burst. Notwithstanding all that may be said or written to the contrary, something more than money is required to gain respect from others than fools. One of the monkeys in "Faust," it is true, says somewhat like this:

> Now my life is but sad, But if money I had, Full soon should I honour obtain.

But then—or he would have been honoured by simpletons only—he must have been an animal of some attainments, a monkey that had seen the world; not an ignoramus. The branches of the Chawley family are very numerous.

Advertising literature is at this moment lending its aid to ambitious people. Now-a-days, any person desirous of seeing his name in print, need only send a testimonial to some regular puffers, and, on the first

of next month, he comes out with the magazines in all the glories of coloured paper. Some of these literary aspirants seem desirous to acquire a lasting reputation as testimonialists by certifying to the excellence of everything advertised, from quack pills to gutta percha. We think that just now the two great rivals are Smith and Jones, and doubtless there are others very famous. But one great name is apt to become lost in a myriad of little ones; a host of small stars may eclipse a single large one. As Emerson says, "The longest wave is quickly lost in the sea." If advertisers are lions, as, in these times, they indisputably are, may not testimonialists be, without flattery, denominated jackals?

Over those gentlemen in Parliament who make long, purposeless speeches, which have only the effect of filling and making dreary the newspaper columns, we pass silently. A love for delivering orations, which nobody wastes his time by reading, is certainly a harmless love; the time of the hearers can of course be of no moment. But we have

promised silence.

In low society the drinker has often ambition, which displays itself in a thirst on the part of its owner to exhibit the strength of his brain by taking more strong waters than his companions without being the worse for it, and, providing he does not get himself into great notice as he goes home, he is (if he be married) pretty sure to do so when he arrives there; but whether to attribute the lecture he receives to his ambition, or to his good luck, we are somewhat at a loss to decide. And there is a large class of persons of whom it is difficult to assert positively whether they achieve greatness or have it thrust upon them, of which class railway companies of "shocking accident" notoriety may be considered

a good sample.

Ambition too often shows itself in a desire on the part of certain persons to surpass every other person in the town or street in which they live, but more often in attempts to rival or overtop some immediate neighbour. Thus great jealousy is generated in the breasts of the Corrys by the splendour of the Harleys, who run a carriage and give parties on a thousand a year, and the Corrys resolve to be equal with them by likewise running a carriage and giving parties on four hundred pounds per annum. The one family has got the most money, but the other having the most ambition will cut an equal figure in public, and make things square by having cold dinners three or four times a week in private; and the deep young gentleman, in search of a girl with some money, hardly knows whether to make up to Miss Harley or to Miss Corry; and far-seeing mammas are equally puzzled to decide on the sons of which family they shall instruct their daughters to smile.

No wonder that there should be so many emulous of parochial honours. There is something particularly pleasing in having a lot of persons under you whom you can do what you like with, even though those persons be paupers; and functionaries of the parish, when once in office, are generally supposed to have attained the utmost summit of their ambition. Acquire greater dignity than that which attaches itself to a member of

our board? Impossible, they say.

Were we one of those amiable writers, commonly called caustic, we might in this place give birth to some fine blue-devilish yet fanciful passages. We might declare, for instance, that this world was a treadmill, and that the laborious ploddings of ambitious people turned it round. But, although we do not say that this may not be the case, we must give it as our opinion that the operation of turning rests with those who are happy in the possession of a large share of this, of all the vices, the one nearest kin to virtue; for, as to the small shareholders, though they give themselves a vast amount of trouble, and make a mighty deal of fuss, in their respective little worlds, the world itself might go round or stand still for them. Only let them shine in the presence of wax candles, and the sun might hide his face as soon as he liked. Reader, if, peradventure, you ever have, never again think ambition uncommon. The question, in these days, is not, Who is ambitious? but, Who is not so?

V.

PEOPLE WHO ARE "DELIGHTED."

THE semblance of sympathy is one of the genteel virtues, and an indispensable part of every lady or gentleman's composition: without it the most enlightened are nowhere; with it, even the ignorant appear refined, exalted. There is something in it which makes its possessor look so large! Firstly, the sympathiser seems ever to tower above the person with whom he or she sympathises, which is a great thing; secondly, it is supposed to indicate some degree of cultivation; thirdly, it has a highly respectable appearance; and hence it follows that it is fashionable, and that you must have it or never lay claim to anything like gentility. And the best of it is, that no consummate acting, no uncommon skill is necessary to be employed to ensure its taking well in society; all that is required of the sham sympathiser being that he have a few set phrases, such as "Very sorry," "Heartily grieved," and "Sorely vexed," always ready for use, and which phrases may be safely and indiscriminately applied to a young lady on the illness of her lapdog, to an old lady on the elopement of her daughter with that nasty, wild young man, and to the last-named personage himself, on the demise of an aged relative of his, leaving him a handsome fortune. Not one of the three will believe such expressions of sorrow; but no matter for that. How elevated, and at the same time how benevolent and destitute of pride, looks the sympathiser. Himself dressed out gaily for dinner or ball, and with countenance radiant with pleasure, he meets some unfortunate, grovelling and pining, and "heartily grieved" springs immediately to his lips. How like a beggar looks the unfortunate; how like one who giveth alms the other! What suavity and condescension. And—shall we say thank goodness?—these charitable persons are anything but scarce. The three braces of words just given are, at this moment and perpetually, ringing on thousands of tongues. But if expressions of compassion are common, what are those of pleasure; such delectable sayings as, "I am very happy that—," "It gives me great pleasure to—," "I am delighted," and so on? The frequent use of these is not confined to scores, or thousands; they are actively employed every day by everybody who goes at all into society, and if they were once, out of every fifty times, used with truth, what a happy, jolly race of mortals we should be to be sure! But a declaration of delight, after all, looks little besides one of pity. This pays in homage what that bestows in charity. In the one instance you are under, or, at any rate, not more than equal to; in the other, high above the person you address. And therefore, were this article given wholly to the sorrowing people, it must be all panegyric—they form such a noble class. Eulogy, however, not being our primary object just now, and having thus directed attention to them, we must leave these folk and devote the remainder of this chapter to a short view of some of those

mentioned, in capital letters, at the beginning of it.

Those who say one thing and mean another are aught but scarce, and among them some of our delighted people may be with propriety ranked. Although these latter, doubtless, intend their speech to conceal their thoughts, they may easily fail in their intention, for you have but to interpret what they say as the exact opposite of what they mean, which is very easy reading, and you arrive directly at the bottom of them. Not that we desire to speak harshly; nothing of the kind; on the contrary, we consider them very pardonable, for they merely say they are delighted when they think they ought to be so, and, in fact, would be so if it were not for the trifling obstacle of their being extremely miserable. Thus, who ever looked upon a dun as a welcome visitor? and yet he frequently meets with a good reception. This poor wretch of a debtor sees a clamorous creditor enter his room, and, if he dare to use such freedom, to the words "Very happy to see you, sir," he gives utterance with a horrible smile: Is the great man very well? and his wife and little ones, how are they? Ah, delighted-ah. And thus this man in debt expresses pleasure to see his dun as though he had never precipitately entered a shop, or risked his life by crossing, amid cabs and coaches, to the other side of the road to avoid meeting him. But when he thus declares his delight, you may depend upon it he is unable to pay. With money in his pocket, how he would frown upon the creditor, while he is now exceedingly civil on that principle which causes a mischievous street boy to be polite to a policeman, and call him "your honour;" and the dun knows it. In the same manner the taxpayer, when he cannot pay, is a worshipper of that hero the tax-gatherer. Delighted to see him looking so well; will he take a seat and a glass of And then comes the dread question, and the trembling answer. The collector will call again to-morrow. The tax-payer, so called, will rejoice to see him at any time. A dun should always be able to ascertain by the welcome he receives from his debtor, and before he has asked a question or spoken a word of any kind himself, whether he is going to be successful or not. He should learn to take a smile and a pleasant word as—I promise to pay; a black look and a growl as—Where's your receipt? The large race of people who are "delighted" may be divided into Those mentioned in this paragraph, and such like, may be called the cringing tribe. The other three are the flattering, the pseudojolly, and the annoying; and at each of these we shall just cursorily glance. The flatterers principally delight to harp on beauty, for which they

The flatterers principally delight to harp on beauty, for which they have such a keen eye that they are constantly detecting it where it was never even suspected to be. They discover charms where the most imaginative poet might look for them in vain, and can squeeze good looks out of a very mummy. Though, of course, this last remark can have no ap-

Amelia an annuity, and who is in the habit of tottering diurnally to, and showing her white face at their house, and whom they ever declare to be looking charming, which much delights them, as it ought to. Indeed, the cases are of such multiplicity, that we think it advisable to abstain altogether from illustration. The flatterers are a popular tribe. We all like to hear others express our own opinions, which accounts for their being so. Their extravagance, being merely an interpretation of our own thoughts, is not only allowed to go uncontradicted, but is silently

applauded.

Of the pseudo-jolly, our old acquaintance Tom Quince may be taken as a specimen. Tom belongs to that legion of married men who are bachelors in almost everything but name. He is little short of fifty, but conducts himself like one of five-and-twenty. He is very deep, yet assumes to be an extremely careless, touch-and-go, devil-may-care sort of man; he receives a favour as though he were conferring one, drinks your three bottles of Burgundy with an abstracted air, and uses your purse as if it were his own; never appears out of humour, and is always glad to see his friends. He meets you in the street, shakes you by the hand very hard, is delighted to see you, and will you lend him two pound ten for five minutes? He catches you by the coat as you are about to treat yourself with a dinner at Verrey's, is in his seventh heaven to think that he has met you, remembers you invited him to take a steak at home with you six months before, when he was engaged, and will be very happy to make

that up by dining with you now.

Some persons do not relish being seen by their friends when in the custody of a sheriff's officer. Not so our Tom. He, labouring under such misfortune, could leap out of his stockings to meet a familiar. In fact, he was just wishing he could see you. Just pay this fellow his demand, and then he will have a little confab with you. Paid. my dear fellow," says Tom, "you remember that infernal Chancery suit of mine?" You rather think you do remember it-know all about it. It has been in the family from the days of great-grandfather Quince, and ever since you have known the present representative of the house, has been going infallibly to be brought to a close in a few weeks at furthest. Well, Mr. Thomas continues, and informs you that he has good reason to believe that it will be all settled next month. He will take a little box down there in Kent, you know, and you really must come immediately and spend a few months with him; he won't take a denial. Now, now, no thanks, he can't do with that sort of thing from you; in fact, he is just going to ask a favour (you thought so from the first)-few friends down at the Swan, whom Mr. Officer caused him to leave rather abruptly, he regrets to say; he is short of money just now-different next month, old boy, rather, eh? and he wants you to advance for a private box at the Lyceum for himself and companions. Pay you back when you get to his box-down there in Kent you know. So fortunate he should have met with you. He is delighted.

Under such circumstances as these implicit reliance may be placed upon his asseverations of delectation; but when you ask a kindness of him we are sorry to say he is in the habit of using the verb "delight" in a tense not the present: he would be delighted to do so if he could,

or, nothing could give him greater pleasure if it were not for so-andso. But as in these instances he fails to come under the title of this

chapter, we will say no more about them.

Always he is glad to see a compeer at his house, and if it be morning, invites him to stay to dinner. We have known six or seven thus invited, but never yet found one who had succeeded in dining with Quince, however desirous of doing so he might have been. In some cases the fault was Tom's, but more often Mrs. Quince's. You shall in a minute have our own experience in this respect.

His favourite associates are young people. He is constantly paying visits but seldom receives any, for very few know where he lives, and out of the two hundred and fifty persons who are on intimate terms with him, not above ten have seen, or twenty even heard of his wife. As we happen to be of the fortunate ten, and having to pass his residence the

other morning, we had no hesitation in dropping in to see him.

"My dear boy," said he, before we were properly seated, "I'm delighted to think you've looked in upon us. Just in time for a mouthful of dinner. We have got nothing very particular, only a bit of lamb I had sent up from Wales, which I think you will enjoy. Now don't say

nay. You'll delight me by staying."

Mrs. Quince entered the room. She is the antipodes of her husband; as cross-grained, saturnine a lady as any one could desire to see. Tom notified to his spouse that we were going to dine with him. "The lamb, you know, my dear." Mrs. Quince is a plain-spoken woman, with no nonsense about her, so she only exclaimed, "Lamb! why, yes, there is a bit left," and as she did so, looked upon us with such an hungry eye that we felt very like a devouring wolf, while her husband himself turned as red in the face as if he had been sitting before the fire on a warm day in July drinking hot tea; in his confusion, however, not forgetting to slily perform sundry pantomimic gestures, which we took to be intended to convey to his wife the fact that there was a butcher's shop in the vicinity. But she was dull, left the room, and he soon followed her into another, where the sound of muffled drums soon told us the worthy pair were quarrelling. We had serious thoughts of taking our hat and running for it, but resolved to wait till Tom returned, and remember an engagement elsewhere we had till then forgotten.

Now when we entered the house, we have no doubt Quince inwardly cursed, and therefore outwardly blessed us; so when we told him we must really go, although we took a load off his mind, he expressed sincerest grief. He shook hands heartily with us as we left him, apologised for his wife's being a little out of sorts, and said he would rejoice to see us at any time—why didn't we come oftener? Should we be dining at home to-morrow? Yes? Well, then, he would come and take a turn with us. Before we reached the outer door, we became aware, for the first time, that he kept a cat, by hearing him cry, in a coaxing tone,

" Puss, puss."

Oh, Tom Quince, thy hypocrisy—thy mere word-welcome, was bad enough; but to commit an assault upon a harmless, unoffending quadru-

ped in that manner, was mean, Tom—mean.

The annoying tribe render themselves such by giving expression to their pleasurable emotions at unseasonable times, and in unsuitable places,

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and though they may mean well, certainly never do it. They are gregarious, and always commit their mischief when there are plenty of lookers-on. They catch an insolvent in society where he is not well known, and, congratulating him, are very happy to see him out of gaol again. Seeing a young gentleman unusually attentive to some miss, they (ladies, most probably) thrust themselves between the two, and are glad to hear that he came off so well in the action which that Midd girl brought against him for breach of promise. They spy a fast man in company in which he is desirous of appearing highly respectable, let it be known that they saw him in his cups last night, and are delighted to see him looking so well this morning after it. They compliment a man who has worked his way up in the world on his prosperity, are overjoyed to see him getting into a carriage, as they remember-doesn't he?—the time when he used to ride behind; and make themselves generally disagreeable by saying what they should content themselves with thinking. But, above all, if you are a lazy individual, it is excessively vexing to have one of these busy-bodies come up and tell you they rejoice to hear that you have succeeded in obtaining employment. To be congratulated on a misfortune is not to be borne. The being annoyed is nothing; the real grievance lies in your not being able to show it. Where is the misery of going into a passion if you can knock down him who was the cause of it? That's rather pleasant than otherwise. But these "delighted" people are, to all bystanders, such dear, kind persons, that even to speak harshly to them would gain you the character of misanthrope for life.

If you would be well liked, be one of these people who are "delighted;" the cringing tribe often smoothen their rough path; the flattering, as we said before, are popular; the pseudo-jolly are by most considered really hearty; and the annoying are, to a large majority, charming. Build

yourself a good name with unctuous words—it is easily effected.

CHANGE.

BY MARGARET CASSON.

CHAPTER IX.

Every chaunted power
Droops like a fading flower.
What hope we more? what more expect, or praise?
From triumph's loud roll.
What is left for the soul
Save woe, and sighs, and sad lamenting lays?
What gain in friendship now? In love what gain?
Ah, flowing tears! ah, racking pain!

My story is, I fear, becoming sadly prolix, yet how can it be otherwise; it is a record of no startling incidents, no stirring narrative of the wonderful or the terrible. Dramas which may occasionally present themselves in reality, but which are the exceptions of life. It is, alas! but "a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong," perhaps too common-place, too every-day a theme to amuse or to interest much. Whilst writing my last chapter, in my usual habit of desultory reading I happened to stumble upon a criticising article of some years gone by—

upon what were then new books-in which fault, and grievous fault, moreover, was found with all such volumes as in the present day so rifefictions, consisting in small portions of delineation, in little screeds of a reflective tendency on ethical ideas, whilst most tortoise-like is the advancement of the whole history towards completion; the art of bookmaking, in fact! As I read, I pondered, and as I pondered, I did not feel quite comfortable, for there rose before me the remembrance of my own story on which I was even then employed. The strictures in question so forcibly applied thereto, I trembled for the future fate of the poor thing; I felt that with the garrulity natural to a favourite subject, I was dwelling upon the life of those I loved with a lingering fondness, which would hardly meet a simultaneous warmth of feeling from the many, with whom, "Jouir c'est la sagesse," and who look upon all things as, Goethe remarks, "the goddess great;" ay, even Wisdom herself is looked upon by some—so why should I repine?—as upon "the milch cow in the field, their wisdom is to calculate what butter she will yield!" Certainly, I fear I shall not amuse them much, " steaming up a lamentation and a doleful tale of wrong;" pshaw, they would find a better and a more heartrending tale in the life on an average of every other man they meet, even amid their own gay compeers. Were the hearts of almost any one laid but open to the mercy of a reading public, what dramas, what tragedies would be unfolded there; often martyrdoms of daily, hourly, momentarily torment, unspoken, yet exceeding in agony and endurance the burning flame and the piercing sword-point! print would shrink back, paled and eclipsed, before the lurid fire glare springing up there! Ay, and not only amongst the rich but amongst the poor, the weary heart-rending struggle going on around you. Think of the silent revolts that are even now working in the head of man against his fellow-men. rich against the rich, and the poor against the poor, and the rich and poor against each other; each so discontented with the present state of things, yet each ignoring whither to turn for amendment and redress. And this is so completely an age of progression, a sifting of the wheat from the tares, which erst have grown together, both springing up and bearing fruit undividedly, until has arisen distress of nations and perplexity—spiritual darkness in high places, an effete, sickly, conventional fulfilling of duties; a form without a soul, threatening to choke and extinguish the little band of earnest hearts and noble minds, labouring hands and untiring faith, which is now struggling into being, and with its infant hands striving for mastery and endeavouring to obtain it, and retain it; which even in its fresh ingenuous youth, with the daring which a pure free intention alone can give, in its strong untrammelled spirit, sitting in the midst of the temple of the Old World, even amid the learned doctors there assembled, in their cold earthworn wisdom, both hearing them and asking them questions, astonishing them at its understanding and its answers; for the days are come when a new covenant must be made, when the laws will be written in the mind, and written in the heart, as well as on tables of stone.

Oh! if the world seem still and quiet now, it is but the deceptive lull which precedes the earthquake, which waits upon all great movements and convulsive throes of nature. Think of the thousands who are wearying and drearying amidst the sickly tide of civilisation which threatens to overwhelm, nay, is overwhelming them, sapping their energy to suffocation in

its slimy folds-think of the thousands, each pining "to burst the links of habit to wander far away," on, on, until they attain to the glorious gateways of the still more "glorious day," and only waiting, because, like Archimedes of old, they could move the world, could but the point be found where to place their lever! Think of these things, ye who would preach peace when there is no peace. It is a fearful day in which we are now living; there is much required of this generation. well! the good time will come at last, though we may probably never see it. The originators of a movement rarely witness its fulfilment; but those who work for the good of others, and not for fame and the praise of men, care not for that. The Amerigo Vespucci may be the namer of the continent-may gain the glory without the toil, but the Columbus will be content to have laboured and conquered the obstacles—to have led the way to the glorious achievement-even though he may but discover the adjacent islands, whilst another may actually be the first discoverer of the glorious New World! What matter it to him; he has done his work; "his life is above in a haven of love, and his heart is with his treasure." He knows all change must be gradual if it is really to be of use, that the only certain insurance of success in life is "to bide your time;" to learn that most difficult lesson for humanity to know by heart, and in its heart to learn, "to labour and to wait"—a lesson the dazzling shallow one you so often meet with now can never learnwhich no one but the earnest-hearted can learn, appreciate, and fulfil. Work, work on, then, to the infinitesimal degree you can work, - pause not and falter not; in the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand! Disheartening, indeed, appears the task, fruitless the toil, when you consider the opposing force of obstacles in antagonism against you; but remember he that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. In the "infinite conjugation of the verb to do," let doing be the present-forming the mainspring of your actions-let "through" be your maxim, let Heaven be your shield-

Through, brothers, through, let this be Our maxim in danger or sorrow. Common clay to its mother earth, All nobleness heavenward.

The poor man by his wisdom saved the city, and also, no man remembered that same poor man, yet does "Gott werlasst den Müthigen nimmer"—
"Heaven will never forsake the brave."

But again a digression? Again have I been led away from my subject, and that after making apology for my lingering progress! At all events I will so far profit by the indirect advice I received from the volume in question to speed onwards now with my tale, and avoid a detailed relation of some parts of Eleanor's history, upon which otherwise I might have dwelt too long. I will not pause, then, to tell how, leaving Dugald, she sought to "calm her spirit's strife" beneath the pure air of heaven, and was joined in her walk by Lady Arlingford, and had to listen and to talk to her, when, in the still evening hour which had succeeded that tempestuous day, she longed to commune with her own heart and be still,—nor how, when the sun was sinking, and the heavens were growing red with roseate cloud-lights in the west, and the two wings of the child-spirit of the evening, calm and faith, tremulously

casting their soft shadow on the heart—peace descending on the world, and hushing to repose the turmoil and the strife of the day, they met Lord Ravenscroft-nor how Lady Arlingford left them then, having discovered something of the utmost importance she had to say to the gardener, appearing in the distance—and how a sudden little shower then did fall, and they took shelter in the conservatory—and how Lord Ravenscroft then and there confessed his love, and Eleanor haughtily refused the proffered gift in cold and measured language, seeming to find relief from pain in so doing, and turned away, feeling Dugald might forgive her now. But she did not see that in the little room which looked into the scene—the room where those painful hours had passed that day—did Dugald Annesley come, ay, even when in his earnest pleading Lord Ravenscroft had seized her hand-that there he witnessed part, and nothing more, for he had turned away. No, Eleanor saw nought that happened there, and Eleanor felt no pity, no compunction for what she was doing, or had done—she was irritated and annoyed; wherever she had sought that day for rest and quiet, she had found it not. She had been battling with the waves, and in fruitless struggle disturbing them more—rather than, halcyon-like, resting on the waters, she might have calmed them and brought peace; and now her pride was turning her to stone! And without a word or a look of pity to her unfortunate admirer she turned away and left him. Erring again-even when meaning to act right-still erring! To refuse his love was well, but a woman

> Should not scorn one soul that loves her: Love is an offering of all poor life hath, And he who gives his all, gives greatly, And deserveth no man's scorn.

Oh! would that women, when they try to win, and in their thought-less presumption to play with hearts, think upon this more,—would that they would feel the full value of the gift with which they do but too often trifle for the mere idle gratification of a senseless vanity; that they would consider the importance and worth of the offering sacrificed at their shrine, and feel, where they cannot return the love bestowed upon them, that it is a source of sorrow and heart-reproach to themselves that it was bestowed upon them, rather than contrariwise, a subject for boast and the triumph of conquest, to lead another captive, as it is too often looked upon. The life-happiness of a fellow-mortal is a fearful thing to have in our power—to turn to desolateness—to shadow with a sorrow—perhaps to alter the whole current of its being; therefore, if you cannot make its joy, mourn with tears rather, oh, woman! wishing it were nothing unto thee, rather than rejoice in the hour of thy pride at the power of thy beauty and thy youth!

On the events of that evening I must dwell to a degree. In a pharisaical spirit of conscious virtue, Eleanor descended to the drawing-room, and yet, oh! so very beautiful did she then appear; generally a certain gorgeousness marked her attire—I do not mean bright hues, or gaudy colouring, but I know not how else to express the general effect she gave. But this evening it was not so; still in slight mourning for her aunt—in her simple dress of white silk, with the unpretending ornaments of jet, and no other adornment in her luxuriant dark hair but the pure spotless blossom of the one white camellia and its rich glossy leaves—when had she ever looked more lovely, "with a soften'd-shadowed

brow, and those dew-lit eyes?" Yet the party seemed altogether very sad. Lord Ravenscroft looked hurt and moody, Lady Arlingford puzzled and anxious, Eleanor subdued and ill at ease, Dugald reserved and silent. It certainly did not promise well.

In the evening Eleanor was asked to sing. Music was to her but another tongue; those who knew her well could always tell her mood by listening to her song. She was an excellent musician, had been well taught, and yet possessed and retained native taste and deep feeling.

Her warbling voice a lyre of widest range, Struck by all passion, did fall down and glance From tone to tone, and glided through all change Of deepest utterance.

She complied instantly; and first she sang some unmeaning, joyous song, some feelingless bravura, but it would not do; it jarred upon her ear, and though all approved, she shook her head; one voice was silent—it did not speak to him, she knew it did not touch his heart. When she commenced singing, Dugald was in the other room. As the first sounds of that rich clear voice fell upon his ear, he listened to it as we do to the sound of distant bells; gay as were the tones, they bore but a sad thought unto him; they only revived dreary, distant memories. They used to sing together once, would they ever again sing together now? He came into the room where she was singing, but only to the folding-door at the far end away from her, and did not even look towards her. But she saw him come, and a sudden impulse seized her soul; and she sang again. The song she chose was, "Cessa ah cessa," that touching one from "Beatrice," and as she sang it, each word spoke a volume to his heart—"di me stesso io son l'orrore!"-and then the beautiful succeeding part, so flutate, so painful in its self-condemnation and agony-"Io soffrii, soffri tortura." Oh, it seemed indeed as if, crushed and abandoned, she could support no more! All other sounds were hushed, all conversation stilled, for all rested absorbed, listening to that one sweet-speaking voice. Dugald buried his face in his hands, totally regardless of others being near, absolutely quivering with his depth of feeling, his uncertainty how to act. The struggle lasted but a little while; his stern resolution was crumbling fast away; with a sudden impulse he strode rather than walked to where Eleanor was. She had finished her song, and was now playing rapidly, desperately, as if from nervousness she must do something, be employed. He stood by her side looking so fixedly upon her—their eyes met; and in that true language which, though words may be false, and the tongue may utter what it meaneth not, never fails in speaking truth; anger was deprecated, forgiveness asked and given; that mute, appealing glance, "the star-like sorrow of immortal eyes" in Eleanor's lovely face, how could he fail to pardon all-to forget her every fault? And this little scene passed unnoticed by every one save by Mr. Ashton; he had seen it, for he was watching her, and it had gone far to solve the enigma which had so puzzled him. He felt truly for those aching, exhausted hearts, and did what he could to help them.

"Lady Harriet, will you not play?" said he. "Miss Stanley, I am certain you are tired." And he contrived to disarrange all around the instrument in such a manner that Eleanor made her escape, and Lady

Harriet Conway was duly established in her stead.

What would they not have given now for the opportunity they had both so madly thrown away that day to speak unreservedly and uninterruptedly to one another; but, alas! if you slight the goods fortune bestows upon you when it is her will and pleasure you should enjoy them, the fickle one will rarely have the generosity to offer the rejected blessing again to your view. They could not speak the thought so near to both their hearts; they dared not trust themselves to broach the subject now; nay, more, a certain strangership had arisen between-a barrier most difficult to pass; and there they sat talking, yes, talking at length to one another, but on the commonest themes, the very last topics their hearts dictated to their lips. Those poor hearts! all the time struggling and fretting beneath the restraint, and longing to be noble, and be good. cannot explain, excepting that it was not to be, that the good and the evil had been placed before them, and that they had then chosen the evil and rejected the good; indeed, Dugald himself told me, later, he felt as though a relentless destiny compelled him to be the instrument of his own destruction; he could not speak, he felt not master of his own words or powers then; possibly an over-excited mind, a dread of what might be the event, withheld him, but he never would admit he was in reality a free agent then—when, in after days, he looked back more calmly on the scene. And truly to me there are moments in life when we feel fettered, and not independent creatures, doomed to set the seal upon our own happiness by some rash act or word which we feel compelled to do or say. And also, I have so constantly witnessed such strange perversion and confusion of common sense, in what are otherwise sensible people; at such times myself, I confess, it has made me rather a fatalist with regard to whom people will marry, a firm believer that marriages are made in And so, with bleeding, distressed hearts, torn to pieces with contending emotions, they discoursed, and were even gay, and laughed, in marvellous contradiction to the truth. But it could not have continued long, this mockery, this voiceless feeling; the false must have yielded before the true, the hollow surface words give place to the earnestness of reality, only their evil genius, in the form of Mr. Stanley, came between. A believer in mesmerism would ascribe his unusual interference in Eleanor's proceedings to the subtle power of that sensitive influence which serves to attract or to repel one human being to or from another, and that, unconsciously and unwittingly, his anti-sympathetic will had warned him that Dugald was a foe to be feared, one set in strong array as an opposing force against his favourite schemes! Any way, dissatisfied with the events of the evening, surprised at Lord Ravenscroft's neglect of Eleanor, and (poor dear man!), in his ignorance little guessing the real cause which kept him so aloof, Mr. Stanley pondered, and thought, and twisted, until at length he drew near to where Dugald and Eleanor were talking, and once there, obligingly talked to him himself instead; and they were separated.

Dugald drew back, and grew cold and distant as ever. Eleanor was fairly conquered now. She made no attempt to rally, but sat reserved, effortless, and disconsolate, during the remainder of the evening, scarcely

speaking or heeding any one around her.

And at length, once again she was alone, with no other companion save her own dark confused labyrinth of thought. She threw open her window, and stood for some time leaning there, gazing on the star-

studded heavens in their glorious immensity. It was a lovely night—so cloudless and so quiet, so calm and eternal in its spirit—her spirit, so fixed on earth and mutability. "There was no light in heaven but the cold light of stars." The night breeze fanned her fevered cheek, and blew gently and low around; it had scarce parted with the geniality of summer yet, and the world in its still beauty of repose seemed instinct with naught but harmony and love. And Eleanor stood there in her own surpassing loveliness, yet a creature of unrest, cold to the influence of the scene.

She looked for sympathy to the stars with uplifted, tearful eyes, and mourning heart; and the stars looked down on her with a clear, searching, still glance in reply, only making

Memory's bitter waters start, And to fill her weary eyes with the soul's rain, A sobbing sound of deep, deep pain:

they spoke but of constancy and eternity. And as she stood there, one falling star shot across the heavens, and the old omen was recalled to her mind—failing love, a falling star—

If you love, and look on a falling star, Failing love, your fate will mar!

And she continued wearily and half-listlessly to keep her vigil yet, but the cold watchers of the night only looked down more coldly still in their sublime serenity upon her self-upbraiding, conscious heart; and the future she longed to view, and penetrate, and read aright, seemed even more vague and inscrutable than before; chilled and desponding, at length she turned away; in the steadfastness of the stars was no comfort for Eleanor!

LITERATURE.

THE imaginary diary of Martha Bethune Baliol,* a young and fair descendant of one of the noble and stanch Jacobite families of Scotland, is supposed to have been penned when the followers of the Stuarts were still under attainder, living in fear of their lives, skulking in various disguises, or serving a foreign king in his wars against the allies of England. Martha herself is a kindly, warm-hearted girl, with just enough of the spirit and pride of the Bethune Baliols in her to give point to her cha-She readily yields her heart and plights her troth to the Lord Derwentwater, at that time living in the disguise of Master Edwardes at Mount Baliol, and who, being subsequently detected and driven out of the country, falls at the battle of Hastenbec, imparting thereby a melancholy and truly tragic tone to the history recorded in the said diary. A character with far more of the features and qualities of the times about it, is portrayed to us in the lively, gallant, and witty Madge Murray, beloved by, and ultimately wedded by, Sir Richard, Martha's brother. The "soft," yet sound-hearted brother Harry, is almost peculiarly a Scotch idea, and it is, as usual, well elaborated and tastefully carried out. A novel such as

^{*} The Diary of Martha Bethune Baliol, from 1753 to 1754. Chapman and Hall.

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this would have made a reputation half a century ago; now, in the profusion of riches, we can only say that it is written with charming simplicity; the language, manners, modes of thought and action, even to the superstitions of the time, being carefully and closely preserved; and it is

quite a literary treasure of its kind.

The fate of the aspirant in fiction must be sometimes like that to which the old nabob, Mr. Munroe, described by H. G. A. Young, Esq., as enriched by thirty years' toil in India, and aiming at a seat in the House, with, perchance, a peerage, as a wider field for his talents, is doomed, when, brought in contact with the thronged avenues to distinction, he finds that he has formed a totally false estimate of his own abilities. "Frank Merryweather"* will scarcely, we fear, stand the test of comparison with its able competitors for public favour almost daily issuing from the press. Not that it is a story without interest. We have Frank, the orphan child of an Indian officer, left under the guardianship of the bilious, surly old merchant Munroe, and of his brother-in-law, Mr. Ponsonby, and robbed of his inheritance by his father's housekeeper, Mrs. Mackintosh, aided and abetted by a military blackleg of the name of Blakeney. We have Constance Munroe inheriting her father's wealth, but not his ill-favoured qualities; we have love between the two cousins, and an ultimate wedding, but not till Frank had hunted boar in India, shot a brother officer in duel, and rescued Constance from fire and water. It is essential to the novel that the course of true love should not run smooth. Then we have, as by-play, Aunt Dorothy, a botanist and blue-stocking, who is made to speak in the following style:

"Ah!" replied Dorothy Munroe, "and is it really so, or am I under some

infatuated delusion?

The character is a mere burlesque, and the courting of the courier Alphonse too broad for a farce at a minimum theatre. We have the gallant Pinkern, a match for blacklegs, duennas, and dowagers, and who makes a successful run with Lady Clara Carlbrook—a character of doubtful principles. The pretensions of Mrs. Mackintosh to superior piety and the practice of evangelical principles, is hit off in better humour, and altogether "Frank Merryweather" affords two volumes of light and amusing reading, not to be scoffed at because not of the first water.

There is a simplicity and candour about the so-called "Autobiography of a Journeyman Printer" † that carries conviction of truthfulness. The author has undoubtedly sketched a character here and there for effect, and raked up an out-of-the-way reminiscence or anecdote, with a view to making his autobiography more readable; but still the general tone is so honest and straightforward as to win our highest approbation. Our journeyman printer, born in Devon, of humble, but honest and God-fearing parents, was well educated both morally and intellectually. Were all working men like himself, there could be no question as to an extension of the franchise, but by his own showing he was rara avis; witness the Fish, the tippling Cockney, the tramps, and a host of others. His life was also more varied than that of most working

* Frank Merryweather. A Novel. By Henry G. Ainslie Young, Esq. 2 vols. T. C. Newby.

† The Working Man's Way in the World: being the Autobiography of a Journeyman Printer. William and Frederick G. Cash.

men, having, his apprenticeship over, gone to seek employment in Paris. He was consequently present at the revolution of 1831, and, as he was afterwards at the riots in Bristol, his comparison of French and English mobs is valuable:

In Paris (he says) I had witnessed the practice of the greatest disinterestedness and self-denial, and the display of unconquerable courage and perseverance united in furtherance of the common good; and I had, moreover, witnessed the virtues of charity and compassion in full exercise towards the common enemy, when that enemy was subdued. At home, in a land where freedom had long triumphed more fully than it has ever yet done upon the soil of France, I had seen outrage and ruffianism tumultuously arrayed against law and order, for the sole object, as it had turned out, of creating an opportunity for destruction, license, and plunder. I had seen the grossest cruelty perpetrated upon the helpless and unoffending, and the most revolting cowardice, as it is ever found to do, characterising the perpetrators. I shall not pretend to philosophise upon the causes of the difference of temper and action between an English and French mob. The sentiment of honour so powerful among the latter, would appear among the former to be displaced by the sentiment of beer.

Among the best sketches in the book we would particularly notice the loves of "the Fish" for the French widow, and the business-like manner in which the affair was settled; the account of the Paris revolution and the Bristol riots; the sketch of a popular author and Burglary Historian; the mysteries of the printing-office; and the weighgoose dinner and the "Governor's" speech; but the fact is, that the work is full of curious readable matter, well calculated to enhance the already existing sympathy for the working classes, and to lessen the breach that prejudice has created between our fellow-creatures.

The "Events of a Year"* are certain

The "Events of a Year" are certainly of a description calculated to in-The story begins where most novels terest the professed novel reader. end—with a marriage. This marriage is celebrated between the Rittmeister Ludwig, a widower after twelve months' marriage, and Lavinia, who had lost her betrothed ten months before. It was a marriage which naturally gave origin to much small-talk, in which few people indulged more than Lavinia's own brother Protocol Secretary V. B. Rudolf and his pretty, spoilt, and capricious wife, Julia. All the talk of the town did The Rittmeister was of a not, however, surpass the reality of the thing. cold, haughty, repulsive disposition; Lavinia was vain, perverse, and spiteful: the happy pair naturally got into a dispute the first evening of the marriage, which soon assumed such serious proportions, as to lead them to an agreement, that for the space of one year they should appear before the world as married people, but that at the expiration of that year they should break a chain which, under such circumstances, would be heavier to bear than that of galley-slaves.

The working out of the story depends upon the positions in which the parties are placed during this year of probation, under such peculiar circumstances. There is Rosenberg and its ministering spirits, the old housekeeper, Dame Brunsberg, and Inspector-Sergeant Stark, characters of an old mould; twins that are nursed and cherished by Lavinia, but grow sickly and die; a Count Adrian, who reads poetry to the beautiful young wife, till the austere Rittmeister gets jealous; and, worse than all,

^{*} The Events of a Year. A Novel. By Emilie Carlen, author of "The Birth-right," "Woman's Life," &c. T. C. Newby. 3 vols.

there is a "fallen angel" in the neighbourhood, with a baby, whom Lavinia has on her side every reason to suspect her husband, and yet not her husband, knows a great deal more about than he ought to do. Then there are piques, misunderstandings, mistakes, and temporary separations, in-termixed with occasional gleams of sunshine and love. The visit of Julia and her weak husband give a climax to previous existing perplexities by the childish folly of Julia, who, to make Ludwig and Rudolf jealous, writes notes of assignation from Lavinia and herself to Count Adrian, the victimised friend of all parties. Luckily, matters are explained; Rudolf and Julia are separated for ever, while Ludwig and Lavinia are united in heart as well as hand. The explanation in regard to the latter is curious. The child that had given Lavinia so many jealous pangs, turns out to be the offspring of her own betrothed; and the Rittmeister, who had never loved his first wife, had sought out Lavinia to make her his, on account of the high-mindedness she had displayed in never letting the inconstancy of her betrothed, which she became acquainted with before his death, be known to the world. All this is of evident German origin; and so, also, of a short tale that follows, called "The Family in the Valley," although no doubt amplified and developed by the able pen of the authoress, Emilie Carlen.

"Sir Frederick Derwent," a novel, by the author of "Fabian's Tower," and "Smugglers and Foresters," in three volumes, published by T. C. Newby, is not one of that class of works of fiction which require a very elaborate analysis. The facts are simply, that Sir Frederick Derwent is a very eccentric, well-to-do-in-the-world, middle-aged country bachelor, who, by the death of a brother, is placed in the inconvenient position of guardian to a very pious, sentimental, lack-adaisical niece, one who, like Niobe, is always in tears, and of a pretty, clever, spirited dame de compagnie, with whom he very naturally falls desperately in love, while the morbid Laura as smoothly and quietly gives away her heart, and ultimately her hand, to a poor and pattern young curate, of whom Sir Frederick, however, speaks as "one of the low church puritanical methodists who infest the country, and turn the heads of fair ladies." The trifling briars that lie in the path of these country lovers, spring from a feud between the families of Derwent and Pemberton, which is obliterated by the marriage of Lewis and Laura; the designs of a certain half-military lady of title, and of a less redoubtable elderly spinster, upon the broad acres and personal independence of Sir Frederick; the rivalry of a gawky, red-haired Scotchman for the favours of merry Clarice le Sage, and from sundry other small events of the same kind. The burden of the story lies decidedly in the anomalous position of Sir Frederick with so young and so fair a charge in his bachelor home, the talk that ensues upon decorum, the censures of neighbours, and the struggles of the defeated parties, who find themselves so unexpectedly routed by a rival so formidable for youth, beauty, and wit, actually intrenching herself at once at headquarters. It is a pleasant story to read, and not a little characteristic of every-day life.

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